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Face to Face
An interview with
NELSON PIQUET

Vol. 5, No.3 May 1991

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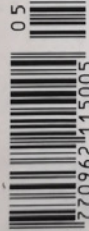
Cash crisis
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Focus on the new Benetton



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POLE POSITION

Nowhere in Formula One is it easier to forget the real world and the problems which inhabit it than in Monaco. The Mediterranean principality is like a mirage, awash with the wealth of those seeking a tax haven and a rest from the high-tech industrial world which generates the cash and the energy which fuels our sport. But it always comes as a shock, particularly to those travellers involved in the F1 circus whose eyes were drawn each day to study the living conditions and standards of life on the roadsides and verges around Interlagos at the time of the Brazilian Grand Prix. There, in the grass, mud and squalor of homes which look temporary but exist as permanent reminders of Brazil's temperamental economy, stood the families who provided the backcloth to a memorable racing weekend. For them, words like disaster and catastrophe are used accurately and not to describe such disappointments as faulty gearboxes and a wrong choice of tyres. In Brazil, all life is on the limit.

With that in mind, it remains disappointing to see the financial difficulties presently facing several Grand Prix racing teams and particularly AGS and Larrousse, two of the best-liked outfits in the pit lane. Their positions, however, only reflect the world we live in as the realities of the economic recession take their toll on companies and individuals worldwide, forcing the survivors to ask if they are pricing their products accurately and marketing themselves properly.

Formula One, by common consent, is going through the same process and, in many cases, finding it a painful exercise. But those teams, organisations and sportsmen who survive this period of belt-tightening financial prudence will no doubt emerge all the stronger and more successful for it in the end.

In such circumstances, hidden benefits also come to light. Young

and promising drivers are given their opportunities and new stars rise and shine. We have already seen the potential of Bertrand Gachot, Mika Hakkinen and J.J. Lehto this year and there is no doubt more will emerge. Monaco is a difficult place for any driver, but these young men will certainly give their best to prove that they

deserve their place among the glitterati. And, as we watch them fighting to prove themselves on the world's most glamorous street circuit, it is worth reflecting on the prospects for those other young people camped out by the roadsides in Sao Paulo. They are the two images of Formula One's constantly-changing world.



Money makes the world go round...

Alboreto wrecks new Footwork-Porsche

Michele Alboreto became the first Formula One driver to be injured in a serious accident this season when he wrecked his new Footwork Porsche FA12 in testing at Imola on April 20.

Alboreto, who the previous week had shown great enthusiasm for the team's new car (see p 67), crashed at the infamous Tamburello curve where Gerhard Berger experienced his fireball smash in 1989.

"He was probably going about 170 mph at the time," said Footwork's managing director Jackie Oliver. "The car was 'totalled' and Michele suffered a bad cut on his right leg."

The 34-year-old Italian required 15 stitches in a wound high up on

his thigh and was immediately declared 'doubtful' to run in the San Marino Grand Prix on the same circuit the following weekend.

Asked exactly what went wrong on the car, Oliver said he and the team were not certain, but were taking steps to deal with all the likely causes of the accident immediately. He said the team would have only one new car available for the Grand Prix.

Alboreto was said to be keen to race at Imola as GPE went to press, but Oliver said a decision on his fitness would rest on a doctor's decision. "The cut is a nasty one and where he comes into contact with the seat so the stitches would re-open easily," said Oliver who was full of confidence for the team at the launch of the car (see p. 82).

Eye-witnesses said the accident appeared to be caused by a broken front wing, but Alboreto said he felt it was something at the back of the car which went. This scenario has chilling similarities to the Berger shunt at Tamburello when a broken end plate at the front of his Ferrari caused the Austrian to career into the wall.

The third week of Imola testing had been badly interrupted earlier in the week by snow which caused many teams to leave and go to Paul Ricard to continue their development and preparations for the opening European round of the World Championship.

Leading times at Imola (April 17-20)

1. Prost (Ferrari) 1:22.4
2. Berger (McLaren) 1:22.9
3. Alesi (Ferrari) 1:23.7
4. Senna (McLaren) 1:23.8
5. Moreno (Benetton) 1:24.3
6. Modena (Tyrrell) 1:24.8
7. Nakajima (Tyrrell) 1:27.4
8. Comas (Ligier) 1:28.0
9. Martini (Minardi) 1:28.6
10. Larini (Modena) 1:29.2



PIT NOTES

■ Goodyear tyre company celebrated their 250th Grand Prix win with Ayrton Senna's victory in the Brazilian Grand Prix. Their involvement in the sport dates back to 1963, during which time they have only been out of the sport for six months. This victory, like their first with Ritchie Ginther in the 1965 Mexican Grand Prix, was thanks to Honda power and Goodyear are alone in managing a Formula One win every year since that first victory.

■ Martin Donnelly walked unaided into church to marry his long-time girlfriend Diane McWhirter on April 14 to show how far he has come since his 150mph accident at last year's Spanish Grand Prix. The ceremony took place at St James Church, Great Ellingham, close to their home in Norfolk. Despite a cast on his left leg under his suit Donnelly's walk up the aisle was the first time in nearly seven months he had moved without crutches. "I had hoped to have the cast removed but it did help me balance," said Donnelly. His bride was equally delighted. "It was fantastic to have him beside me and everything to go ahead exactly as we planned," she said. "It is difficult to believe that just a few months ago he was in hospital in intensive care." In the accident Donnelly broke both his legs, collar bone and skull and later suffered internal complications with his liver, kidney and lungs and was in intensive care for six weeks. He spent a further four months in hospital before transferring to Willy Dugli's rehabilitation clinic in Austria. Donnelly had set himself an original target of a tentative test in a Lotus by the end of April but realistically that may have to go back further. Lotus are standing by to make a car available as soon as



Congratulations Martin and Diane

Donnelly feels ready and latest predictions are for September.

■ The troubled Leyton House Grand Prix team have announced another major re-shuffle of its senior management. They announced on April 9 that joint Managing Director, Simon Keeble, had left the company and Mike Smith has taken sole charge. The biggest changes were in the design department where Chief Race Engineer, Gustav Brunner, has been promoted to Technical Director, over the head of Chief Designer Chris Murphy. Brunner, a vastly experienced designer, has also been appointed to the team's board of directors. Gordon Coppuck, returns to Leyton House, from Simtec and takes the role of Engineering Director. Owner, and multi-millionaire, Akira Akagi has taken closer control of the team with the appointment of Mr Yasutada Oda, of Leyton House KK in Japan, as Chief Executive "in order to foster closer co-operation and communication between the team and their Japanese owner," said a team statement. After the promise of 1988 the team has scored just 11 points in the last two years and been on the podium only twice. Mauricio Gugelmin was third in Brazil in 1989 and Ivan Capelli was second in French GP last year. The only other points of the season coming from Gugelmin's sixth place in Belgium. Their troubles seem to have spilled over into this year with the vandalism of the team's cars in Phoenix and then the fire extinguisher accidentally going off in Gugelmin's car in the last race in Brazil, restricting his race to just a few laps before the pain forced him to retire.

■ Footwork-Porsche director John Wickham has added the role of team manager in place of Alan Rees who has stepped up to the role of financial Director.

■ At the same time as they unveiled their new Grand Prix car at the Porsche offices in Reading (see separate story) Footwork unveiled a new three-year sponsorship deal with German electronics giant Blaupunkt and the German division of Shell. The international division of the oil conglomerate already supplies McLaren and Tyrrell.

■ Jordan Grand Prix is to be sponsored by the Japanese Fuji Corporation - which co-incidentally has the same colours as Jordan's Irish green.

■ Jack Knight, founder of steering and transmission specialists Jack Knight Developments, died on Saturday, March 30. He was 73. Jack Knight was well known for his work with Cooper in the 1950's and 1960's and later became an integral part of much of Britain's racing expertise and success.

■ During the course of the April 3-6 tests, the Imola organisers proudly announced that they had signed an agreement for five more years of Formula One at their circuit. They had been afraid of losing the race to the recently re-vamped Mugello circuit which had been bought by Ferrari.

■ Tony Rudd, for so long synonymous with Team Lotus and the Lotus Group, has officially retired from work for both companies after 53 years in the motor industry.

Barnard's new baby: Is this the real thing?



Vision of the way ahead

John Barnard has designed another new car for a new team, this time Camel Benetton Ford, to follow his acclaimed work for McLaren and Ferrari during the 1980's. The new car is the Benetton B191, to be powered by the latest Ford HB V8 engine.

The launch of the new car took place at the Sheraton Skyline hotel at London's Heathrow airport amid flashing lights, loud music and spiralling smoke. For Barnard, a shy and retiring man by nature, it was an embarrassing experience. He much preferred to discuss his new car, his thoughts on the current Formula One scene and his design philosophy in a quiet way...

Does this car fit into your concept of a three-year development cycle for each car? Do you still hold this philosophy?

Barnard: "Yes, but I think when I refer to a three-year cycle, from my point of view, I refer to it as a programme. Let's say, on entering a new project that when you hope to be front-running competitive, it is after three years' work. I don't think we can run a chassis on as long

now as we used to without changing it. Certainly, this chassis is my first departure from the old ways of manufacturing a chassis which I have been doing up to now and it is a combination of both the way a lot of people have been doing it and I've been doing it. It is a combination of both and a first step towards building a chassis in a slightly different way in future. It is different in as much as the chassis represents a lot of the aerodynamic surface which I have not done before, having always carried bodywork for that, and at the same time I have tried to leave it open in a few areas where we can play aerodynamically and make significant changes without changing monocoques. I still have that option. But you have to remember I started with this, with Benetton, looking at making an input or the whole team and

looking at everything technically back in November 1989, so we are already half-way through a three-year cycle. I think also that what happens today is that we get engine changes far more than we ever used to. Of course, we had changes in the past, but the fundamental package always remained unchanged for three years or so. Now people are building new engines if not every year, then every other year, so you have to have a very flexible three-year programme for development all the time."

Does this mean huge leaps in engine development will automatically mean new monocoques? And can you cope with this?

Barnard: "Yes, certainly. When you change the engine you change such a significant part of it all that you may not be able to use the monocoque again. But what I've tried to do here, as opposed to just designing a car, is to create a situation where you can build exactly what you know you want to design. So, before you design something, you know you can build it and to do that you have to buy new machinery, employ new personnel who can do many different jobs. Then when you are happy you can do everything in a different, a new, way, you get on with the job. That is what a lot of the activity up to now has been - just working to create the right environment. Once we had achieved all that, then knew we were capable at Benetton of building a chassis I wanted - in a different way with all the capability to do it in house. This means too that we can make changes to the chassis if we need to and when we need to, like changing the shape a little bit or something. It is no big deal if you have

all the technology in house. But you have the flexibility, which is what I want with this car."

Is it a major step forward, this new manufacturing method? What are you aiming for with this car?

Barnard: "It is not such a big step. It is a small step. They all are really, except for going from aluminium to composites and things like that. It is a case of perfecting a lot of technology in-house and developing our capability. I am still trying to get to my objective of drastically reducing the number of components that make up a car. On one hand, with electronics and so on, we are increasing all the time, but on the other hand, to avoid having thousands of pieces on the car, I am trying to create it with less and less pieces. I am aiming to get, for example, to a monocoque where you make it and machine it and it is done. That's it. Finished except for bolting on the suspension and engine. In order to reduce the number of parts, I have designed this car as a step in this direction."

Does the manual gearbox not mean you lose space aerodynamically around the cockpit? This must be a disadvantage?

Barnard: "To some extent, yes. It has in those respects meant compromises. Yes. These have been unavoidable. We could not get to the position we wanted. It takes too long. All the equipment and personnel, the big learning curve. It takes a long time to test and develop something of that complexity for racing. I think if you arrive at the point where the auto-box is working just how you want it to with no problems, then you might sit down and make a change in shape on the chassis

which would require a new chassis to be made, but I would do that year by year. It is not easier altogether, but it is easier to be an optimised chassis, much less compromised than before. And we will be able to build around that in house very quickly whenever we need to do anything."

When will we see the semi-automatic box in the car?

Barnard: "I really don't know yet. It is not at the front of my queue of ideas for the car at the moment. It is in development. But active could be racing this year. It could be. But we are not even thinking about taking a decision until we have more information from development and testing."

What do you think of the new McLaren MP4/6, the Ferrari 642 and the Williams FW14?

Barnard: "Well, Williams have the fastest car in my opinion, but Honda have done a fantastic job with their engine. The V12 is so tractable and by the sound of it has such a wide power band. It is very impressive. I think the Williams is the quickest car, decidedly, but will have all the usual

problems associated with an automatic box. This, like a lot of things seems inevitable. You cannot achieve the last five per cent of any development until you put the car in a race and tell the driver there is a flag... go. And he switches from Mr Test Driver to Mr Racing Driver."

Are you at a disadvantage now because Williams and McLaren have already raced their new cars?

Barnard: "That's the problem with F1 these days. It is an ongoing thing. It really is a 12-month cycle and where you cut into it and where you put a new car is almost irrelevant. It is made relevant only by rule changes, which is something they drop on you at the last minute. It is something which has to stop. If we are to believe what we are told it will stop, certainly, from next year and the year after. That should allow us to consider things as an on-going cycle and bring bits in when they are ready and so on. It is unfortunate that this new car has had to come out for the first European race and not the first race of the year."



First time out at Imola

KEEPING TRACK: DIARY

MARCH 11

Phoenix: AGS and Larrousse are rumoured to be on the point of merging. According to the best of the stories doing the rounds, Gerard Larrousse is doing the pushing for a new identity which would save both teams from their perilous and unstable financial positions.

MARCH 14

Mugello, Italy: Reports from Italy say that Ferrari are testing a new engine, codenamed the 291/2, which, it is said, features heavily revised internals. The V12 power unit is to be used with a new chassis for the San Marino Grand Prix.

MARCH 18

Rochdale, England: Scott Russell Race Engines are said to be pressing hard in their search for a Grand Prix team. It is said that they are hoping to find a team to take their new 3.5-litre V8 and the V12 which is to follow.

MARCH 19

Silverstone, England: Damon Hill makes his test debut for the Canon Williams Renault team, trying out several modified gearbox parts which the team need to check out before the Brazilian Grand Prix. Hill drove an FW13B fitted with the new Williams automatic gearbox.

MARCH 20

Tokyo, Japan: Italian Pierluigi Martini is voted as the sexiest driver in Formula One by the readers of one of Japan's leading motor racing magazines.

MARCH 21

Silverstone, England: Cosworth Engineering are reported to be carrying out development work on the Ford HB series V and VI engines amid claims that when they have finished the V8's will be the fastest-running engines ever built.



Senna, the birthday boy

MARCH 21

Sao Paulo, Brazil: Ayrton Senna celebrates his 31st birthday at Interlagos on the eve of the Brazilian Grand Prix by giving a press conference and then starting a good-natured 'cake fight' with his chocolate birthday gâteau.

MARCH 22

Sao Paulo, Brazil: Ayrton Senna in a Marlboro McLaren Honda tops the times in opening qualifying for the Brazilian Grand Prix.

MARCH 23

Sao Paulo, Brazil: Senna cuts a further 2.5 seconds off his time to take pole position with Riccardo Patrese in a Canon Williams Renault second fastest.

MARCH 24

Sao Paulo, Brazil: Senna wins the Brazilian Grand Prix for the first time despite severe gearbox problems with his McLaren MP4/6.

MARCH 25

Sao Paulo, Brazil: In the aftermath of the Brazilian Grand Prix, it is revealed that the merger talks between Larrousse and AGS had broken down. Further news talk confirms that Alan Rees, a founder of the former Arrows team, has stepped down from his role as team manager with the new Footwork-Porsche team to become financial director.

MARCH 27

Heathrow, London: Camel Benetton Ford unveil their new B191 car, designed by Technical Director John Barnard, at a highly-publicised launch in a hotel at London airport.

APRIL 6

Imola, Italy: Riccardo Patrese, driving a Williams-Renault, sets the fastest time in testing at Imola. Nigel Mansell is absent following the death of his father. Williams uses Mark Blundell as a replacement driver and he clocks the sixth best time.

APRIL 10

Reading, England: The Footwork-Porsche team unveil their new FA12, designed by Alan Jenkins, at the Porsche headquarters.

APRIL 13

Great Ellingham, Norfolk, England: Martin Donnelly walks down the aisle, without the aid of crutches, to marry his long-time girlfriend Diane McWhirter. The previous evening he had appeared on television.

APRIL 14

Silverstone, England: The Footwork-Porsche FA12 runs for the first time with Michele Alboreto at the wheel for six laps of the south circuit. In France, it is reported that the AGS team has placed itself in voluntary receivership. The team plans to continue racing while steps are taken to resolve its financial problems.

APRIL 20

Imola, Italy: In testing, Michele Alboreto crashes the new FA12 at Tamborello at 170 mph. The car is wrecked, Alboreto escapes with a badly-cut leg.

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Grand Prix Recession:

"It's the worst yet," says Tyrrell

BY ANDY SMITH

The full effects of the recession may not be apparent in Formula One for another two or three months yet according to veteran team boss Ken Tyrrell.

He believes that this season could be the end of the prequalifying system as cash backing available to F1 teams is reduced in the aftermath of the recession and the Gulf War.

Stock market pundits have suggested that the recession would not be as damaging overall as most commentators had assumed; but Tyrrell warns that Formula One should brace itself. "A number of teams are in dire straits and as the season goes on I fully expect that some of them will fall by the wayside. We've never experienced that before in F1, but I'm afraid that it could happen this year. The previous recessions have not been as bad as this one or certainly not effected F1 as much. We probably won't see the results for a couple of months yet."

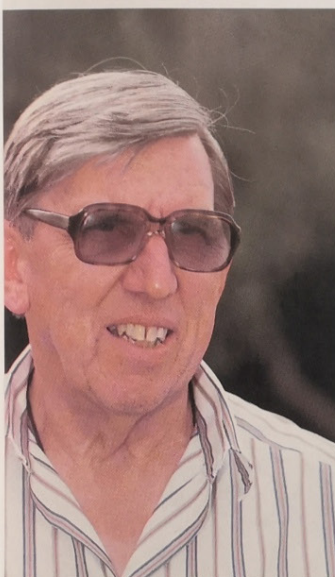
Speaking in the five week hiatus between the Brazilian and San Marino Grands Prix, Tyrrell noted that the fabric of the sport has changed since he first ran a F1 car in 1968 though he insists that his cause for concern is not because F1 is too big or too international. "It's certainly expensive yet the fact that we have prequalified this year, as we did in 1990, suggests that we have plenty of teams ready to take a risk. The problem is the recession and the Gulf War causing so many companies to cut back on their advertising and marketing budgets and it is those budgets that are used by Formula One."

With the sponsorship cash spread more thinly throughout the

sport the obvious teams to suffer will initially be the prequalifiers - currently Jordan, Lamborghini, Coloni, Fondmental and Dallar. Ken Tyrrell does not expect the early morning qualifying for qualifying to be around much longer. "By Australia, the final race of the season, it would not surprise me if we did not see any prequalifying." Of the teams that do have to go through the initial process, Tyrrell rates Jordan's performance as the highest. "So far they've come through the prequalifying well and that's an achievement because it really is a pain!" Jordan worked hard on securing major sponsorship - making almost 400 presentations to international companies before completing the deal with the soft drink manufacturer 7-Up. Tyrrell themselves, well known for attracting big name sponsors only to lose them to bigger teams, run under the banners of Braun, the German electrical goods manufacturer, and the Japanese food firm Calbee among others. "We are better off this year than ever before," said Tyrrell "but then again we're expecting to be a bigger team than last year." Tyrrell won two manufacturers titles in 1969 (as Matra) and in 1971, but have not won a Grand Prix since Michele Alboreto brought the 011 home first at Detroit in 1983. Forecasts by eminent observers suggest that this could be Tyrrell's best year for a decade and more, designer Harvey Postlethwaite's 020 having already picked up five points at Phoenix, and the team unaffected so far by the problems Ken Tyrrell says are looming for others. "We've expanded our work force at Ockham from 65 to about 100



LEROY



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people so our expenses have increased considerably, we are still trying to build a team and a car on a budget that's less than half, maybe a quarter, of McLaren, Ferrari or Williams."

It sounds like an unfair competition, similar to asking Notts County to challenge for the European Cup against Juventus, Marseille and Real Madrid. Tyrrell is emphatic, there is nothing unfair about it. "It's up to us. We have to find the money that will enable us to do the job properly." He has set his team a target for the rest of the season - to finish with both cars in the points at the end of every race. "We can see our way clear to beat-

ing some of the teams between us and the Championship leaders, but it's going to be very difficult to beat McLaren and Senna. There's no doubt that McLaren have built a much-improved car this year - the Honda 12 cylinder engine worked straight out of the box - add Senna and it's a formidable combination to suppose that they won't remain as strong all year - everyone has their little ups and downs." For some, the downs will be outs, he predicts but does see a little light in the gloom. "Everyone will have a hard time this year but as the recession fades, 1992 could see the revival of past fortunes."

Tyrrell have expanded, said Ken, with more sponsors and success as our pictures show



Take Two 27's

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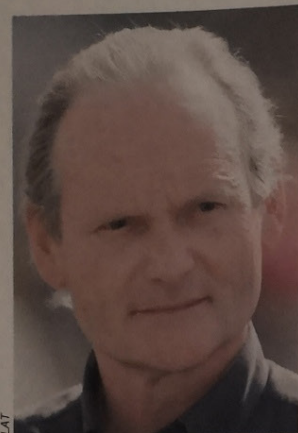
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■ BY GERALD DONALDSON

Let's Keep on Making the News...

"Go to the bathroom whenever you get the chance," Christopher Wren, foreign correspondent for the New York Times, suggests this is one of the basic rules of survival for travelling journalists. His advice seems useful for those who travel the world with the Grand Prix circus, though putting it into practice is not always an easy task for race-goers...

Perversely, those venues where the volatile nature of the local cuisine can bring about the greatest sense of urgency tend to have the more limited, and primitive, facilities. Following the anguish and indignity of standing cross-legged in a lengthy queue, there is the distinct possibility of having to find relief in a horrific medieval device that can be such a shock to the system that one is reluctant to use it for the intended purpose. The suffering scribe who is caught short must learn to grin and bear it, either throwing caution to the wind or developing an iron constitution.

Off-putting too, particularly for male journalists, is the custom in certain countries of having female attendants man (woman?) the conveniences. The close proximity of one of these (invariably large and sturdy) custodians tends to make one shrink from the task at hand. When a tip is not immediately forthcoming they become particularly zealous in carrying out their duties (doling out paper as if it were currency, cleaning the cubicles and scowling at those who would dare defile their handi-

work), so one is forced to pay for one's privacy.

But even unattended loos can be the scene of embarrassing encounters, as I discovered while standing in one of those notorious Silverstone pissoirs a few British Grands Prix ago. There were two of us in the decrepit WWII-vintage hut, going about our business with as much nonchalance and dignity as one can in these situations, both steadfastly observing the unwritten rule of thumb that requires one to look up, down or straight ahead - never sideways.

It was peripheral vision, not curiosity, that caused me to break the accepted protocol and become an eyewitness to the spectacle of a field mouse crawling up the trouser leg of the gentleman (one of the blue-blazered type which abound at Silverstone) with whom I was sharing the trough. Since the rodent's furtive journey was taking place behind his back, the gentleman had failed to notice it and, casting decorum aside, I brought it to his attention. "Pardon me sir, there's a mouse crawling up your leg."

He glanced at me suspiciously

then quickly averted his gaze. I repeated the warning but still he refused to heed it. Instead, he began to frown at what he obviously regarded as some kind of perverted overture. Finally the mouse came into his view, quite clearly making rapid progress in the direction of his open flies. The gentleman began hopping about dementedly, attempting to dislodge the mouse by frantically shaking one leg while trying to keep the other firmly planted in front of the urinal so as not to spoil his aim.

Since he was being spectacularly unsuccessful in this latter manoeuvre I quickly took my leave, bringing into play another of Christopher Wren's survival suggestions for journeying journalists: "Don't carry anything you can't carry at a dead run for half a mile."

Here too the Grand Prix journalist is faced with obstacles that interfere with putting a rapid retreat into effect. Chief among them is the plethora of printed matter that inundates the pressroom each race weekend. In Brazil I dutifully collected one example of each press release issued by the teams, the FISA news bulletins, the sponsor's press kits and the Longine/Olivetti timing and results sheets and came away with a bundle bigger and heavier than my laptop computer. Besides playing havoc with the weight reduction and aerodynamic

efficiency of a journalist in a hurry the combined effect of this cumbersome accumulation is to stand in the way of truth.

Because there are far more losers than there are winners one might reasonably assume that losing is far easier than winning. But this is not necessarily the case in Formula One where, according to the excuse sheets issued on behalf of the 33 non-winners at every race, losing is a much more difficult and complicated process than simply taking the chequered flag first.

The chronicles of heroic failure begin to appear early on Friday when several press releases explain in great detail the fascinating misfortunes of those who have failed to even pre-qualify to be able to lose. For the survivors, there follows two days of puff pieces devoted to the tremendous effort of not getting good grid positions. Finally, on race day, because the poor victor is outnumbered 25 to 1, the bulk of the news is heavily favoured in favour of the vanquished.

In the heat of the battle to get the racing news out to the waiting world there is a danger that the tale of anyone unfortunate enough to be successful will be swamped in the sea of words describing the entertaining misadventures and the elaborate, iron-clad alibis of the also-rans. This is especially true when a driver wins unchallenged,

as Senna did in Phoenix. It helps if a winner triumphs despite adversity, as Senna did in Brazil, but his problem is that he wins too often. People get bored reading about incessant success, silk purses are not nearly as newsworthy as sows' ears, and Ayrton Senna would likely get more ink if he lost.

(The phenomenon of loser as hero may be particularly peculiar to the English who, according to the essayist Philip Guedalla, "always prefer someone, who is something, to be really something else. This is called the amateur tradition, and is a sure safeguard against the grave menace of professionalism." Monty Python alumni Michael Palin put it another way: "The British like distinction to seem ordinary and unwilling... a kind of muddling accident." This attitude helps to explain the ultra-professional Senna - though some argue that he achieved some of his success by accident - still often fails to get positive results in the press).

So, the harassed hack who concentrates on trying to avoid being contaminated by the propaganda fallout in the pressroom, and the potential trouble in the toilets, runs the risk of completely overlooking Christopher Wren's third rule of the travelling journalist: "As soon as you land in the middle of a story, start figuring how to get yourself out of it."



Eric Bernard in Brazil - another heroic failure

A rare instance of a car company not blowing its own trumpet.

"The best road car Ford has yet built."

CAR MAGAZINE

"The car is at its most impressive on a tough, twisty, pock-marked gradient. On this terrain the Cosworth felt utterly in command, sure-footed and safe. You can drive very quickly with the reassurance of considerable reserves of grip and stability."

THE OBSERVER

"The most exciting road car Ford has produced since the GT40."

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"Handling is super-sharp but always on the right side of twitchy. Cornering grip is nothing short of sensational by any standards, never mind by saloon benchmarks."

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THE OBSERVER

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PERFORMANCE CAR

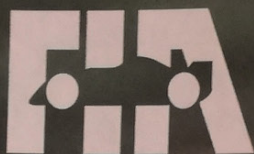
"The best four-wheel drive saloon car you can buy."

AUTOCAR & MOTOR



The Sierra 4x4 Cosworth.





RACE NUMBER 2

SAO PAULO

MARCH 24TH 1991



In Phoenix it came straight out of the box and flattened its rivals. The McLaren MP4/6, that is. Frankly it threw a lot of people into confusion, not least the majority of the engineering staff at Ferrari!

■ BY RICHARD CHANDLER

"Wait until Interlagos," Alain Prost had said after finishing second to Senna in Arizona, on a circuit on which the Ferraris have never felt at home. "I'm not going to form a hard opinion on my car until I see how it performs there."

There had been a quiet confidence in his tone then, but the events of the Brazilian GP were to make that north American second slot look like a picnic. If Prost and Ferrari had expected to get near the Brazilian pace, boy were they in for a rude awakening. Senna, as we know, won again, bagging another 10 points to build himself up a nice Championship lead in a year when everything he can bank will earn him interest. But the bald facts hide what will come to be regarded as one of his finest race victories. This was one that mattered most to him after his seven previous attempts to triumph in front of his countrymen had failed. It did not come easily.

There is an important point to grasp about Brazil, for it marked a settling of F1 perspectives. The McLaren, at least in Ayrton's hands, had pulped its opposition first time out. The Williams FW14s had looked good, though, and in Brazil they came to the fore.

If you took a mean of the qualifying times of Senna and beleaguered team mate Gerhard Berger, you perhaps got the true picture. Senna took the pole yet again, his 54th, with the dramatic 1m 16.392s lap. Berger lined up fourth on 1m 17.471s. The average is 1m 16.931s and that, tellingly, would appear to put the car behind the Williamses. Riccardo Patrese, again in superb form, outqualified Nigel

Mansell, 1m 16.775s to 1m 16.843s, their mean being 1m 16.809s. So was the McLaren so good purely because of Senna, or was it really a case of being a better car than the Williams, and Gerhard letting it down?

Certainly, Mansell had the legs of Ayrton during the race. We groaned a little when the Brazilian pulled out a massive 2.5s within the first six laps, afraid we were to witness another demonstration run by the World Champion, but we need not have feared. Gradually Mansell began to haul him in again. By lap 21 it was less than a second.

All of Goodyear's runners expected to stop once for fresh rubber, only Ferrari planning two calls, but when Mansell made his at the end of the 25th lap it all went wrong. The tyre change itself was reasonable, but for agonising seconds he couldn't find a gear in the semi-automatic box. Senna made his stop the following lap, and it took him half the time. When Nigel had worked back into second place by lap 29 the gap was back to 7.26s and he had to start all over again. He took it easier this time. It was 7.27s even as late as lap 33, but had halved 10 laps later. The lowest it got was 31s on lap 44, but then a combination of traffic and something else opened it again. The something else was the cut on his right rear Goodyear had sustained on its centreline. He came in on lap 50 for another stop, got out in front of Patrese, and started the attack for the third time. By lap 59 he had reduced lap 51's 34.8s deficit to 18.9s and the mathematically inclined frantically tried to

work out his chances over the remaining laps.

It could have been done, but ultimately it wasn't. Like Patrese, Mansell had been suffering from the occasional slow downchange from the trick gearbox. One of them caught him out on lap 60 and pitched him in to a spin and he took the downhill left-right flick after the pits. Perhaps a more mechanically sensitive driver might have spared the car more. Whatever, Mansell did one of his crowd-pleasing spin turns, wreathed in tyre smoke, took off again in the right direction and got up to third gear before, he later alleged, he found there weren't

anymore cogs to be had.

What was the truth? Or had he, in his fourth racing start of the race, overtaxed the transmission the way he had the Ferrari's with that Don Garlits start in Suzuka last year? Patrick Head was diplomatic, "No," he responded thoughtfully, "no, I don't think he damaged the transmission doing that." He paused, then added: "But I do wish he was a little gentler..."

Whatever it was, a self-imposed wound or not, Mansell was through for the day in a race he would probably have won. With him went 14 Championship points, for had he triumphed he would have won 10; equally important,

Senna would have had four fewer. Instead of Senna 20, Mansell 0, it could have been Senna 16, Mansell 10. Those 20 points are going to be very difficult to make up as the season progresses...

Patrese sat 40s behind Senna after Mansell's demise, but that's when the Brazilian GP, one of the better F1 races in recent times, came alive again. Round the circuit it was audible that Senna was having gear selection trouble, had been since fourth gear went awol on lap 51. He began missing it out, but the strain became too much. With seven laps to go, third and fifth went out in sympathy. By now a light drizzle had turned

RACE NUMBER 2
SAO PAULO
MARCH 24TH 1991

SAO PAULO



In hot pursuit of Senna...

LEROY



Prost - a lucky 4th



Circuit Interlagos, 1991



Mansell, unable to finish... again.

the track into a greasy spoon. Devoid of intermediate high gears and fearful that, if he took it out of sixth he might not be able to get the McLaren into any gear, Senna was cruising in a McLaren with a continuously invariable transmission. Without the benefit of the engine braking the fast corners were a nightmare, and more than once, he admitted, he nearly went straight on. In the slower turns the Honda V12 was abused

down to a near-stall at 2000rpm, yet its flexibility saved it time and again.

All the while Riccardo was closing, nursing his baulky transmission. Still troubled by the mechanical problem which dogged the gearbox in Phoenix, Williams had tested an FW13B with Damon Hill at Silverstone between races, and deleted sixth gear in the interest of reliability. That was only a partial cure, though, as the occasional

slow downchanges presented the Italian with a dilemma. Did he push and risk losing six points while trying for 10, or did he settle for an honourable second? In the end, he admitted, he plumped for the latter and Senna duly won by 2.97s, to the delirium of the 70,000 Brazilians who poured from the local favelas.

"I have not felt this way after a Grand Prix since Kyalami in 1984," he admitted as he nursed the pain

from muscle cramps and spasms in his chest. That time he had hauled his noseless Toleman home in the heat to score his first Championship point. Now, as he savoured this triumph, there was time to unwind from the emotional high. "I didn't think I would make it," he confessed, "when I could see Patrese coming, but I felt like it was my duty to win here. God gave me this race."

What He gave Senna, he clearly

took away from the 1990 victor, Prost. Only in the race morning warm-up did the 642s shine at Interlagos, as the Frenchmen ran second only to Mansell, but the speed was fleeting. As in qualifying the previous year, the Ferraris' didn't make the best use of their soft rubber as Jean Alesi just eased out Alain for fifth place on the grid. And in the race neither benefited from his first stop. Prost had got bottled up behind Piquet's fleet

Benetton Ford and the Ferrari could do nothing worthwhile to overtake. Indeed, had Piquet not had a clutch problem in the final 20 laps, Prost would probably have been beaten to the fourth place he eventually salvaged.

After all the promise the 642s showed in winter testing, Ferrari's long spell without an aerodynamicist, since Henri Durand departed for McLaren in mid-season and Jean-Claude Migeot rejoined

RACE REPORT

INTERLAGOS, BRAZIL

1991 Race No.2

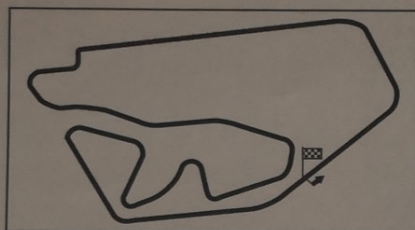
Circuit length
2.687miles (4.325kms)

Race distance
71 laps (190.777miles)

1990 Winner
Prost (Ferrari 641)

Qualifying record
Senna (McLaren Honda)
1'17.277 (201.483kph) 1990

Race lap record
Berger (McLaren Honda)
1'19.899 (194.871kph) 1990



RACE NUMBER 2
SÃO PAULO
MARCH 24TH 1991

Pre-Qualifying

Pos	No	Driver	Time
1	22	J J Lehto	1'19.540
2	33	A de Cesaris	1'20.150
3	32	B Gachot	1'20.184
4	21	E Pirro	1'20.567
5	35	E Van de Poele	1'20.919
6	34	N Larini	1'22.944
7	31	P Chaves	1'23.231
8	14	O Grouillard	1'23.951

Qualifying

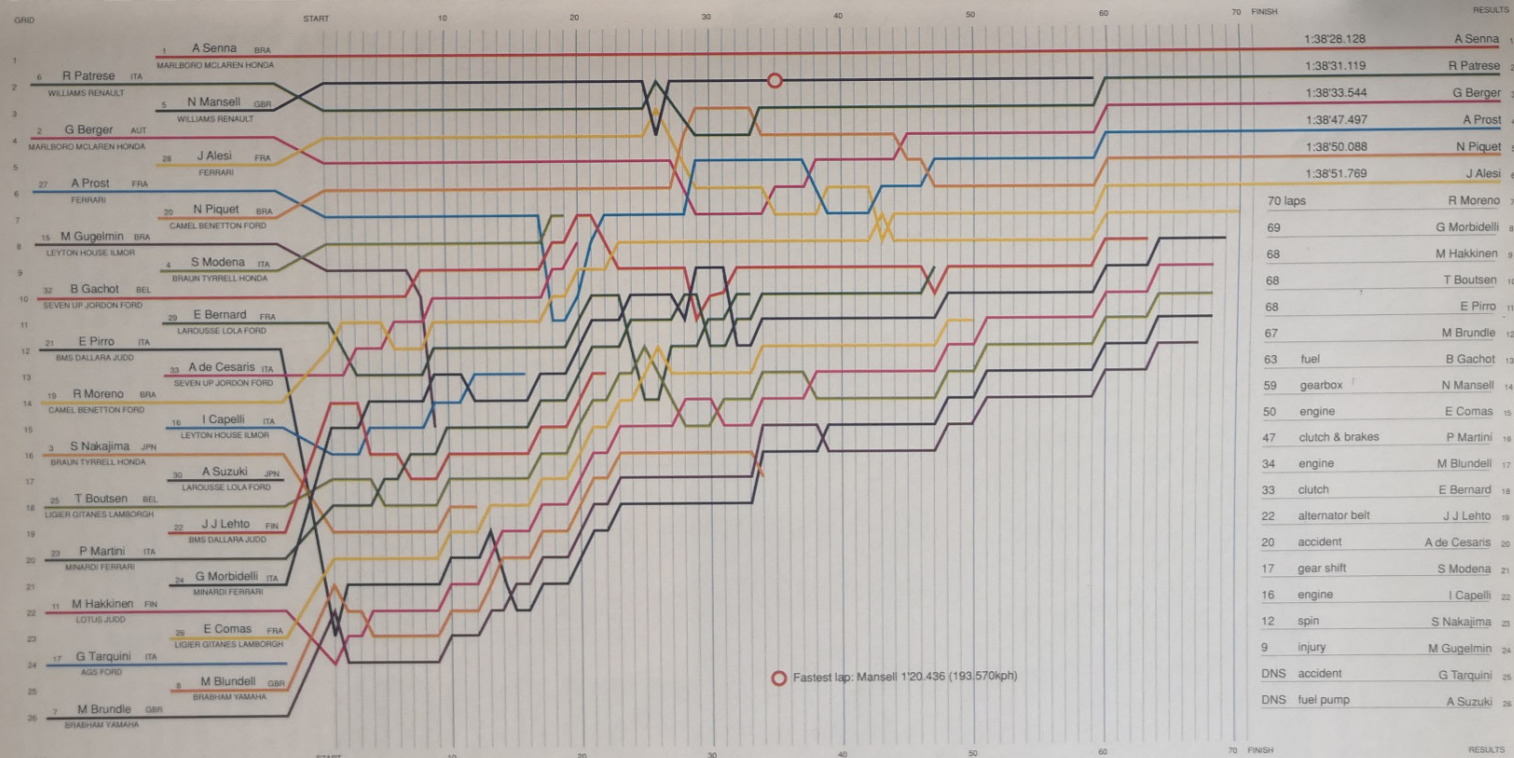
Pos	No	Driver	Friday	Saturday
1	1	A Senna	1'18.711	1'16.392 ■
2	6	R Patrese	1'22.069	1'16.775 ■
3	5	N Mansell	1'20.056	1'16.843 ■
4	2	G Berger	1'19.577	1'17.471 ■
5	28	J Alesi	1'19.350	1'17.601 ■
6	27	A Prost	1'20.079	1'17.739 ■
7	20	N Piquet	1'20.105	1'18.577 ■
8	15	M Gugelmin	1'22.196	1'18.664 ■
9	4	S Modena	1'21.709	1'18.847 ■
10	32	B Gachot	1'21.493	1'18.882 ■
11	29	E Bernard	1'22.127	1'19.291 ■
12	21	E Pirro	1'21.286	1'19.305 ■
13	33	A de Cesaris	1'21.710	1'19.339 ■
14	20	R Moreno	1'21.266	1'19.360 ■
15	16	I Capelli	1'21.171	1'19.517 ■
16	3	S Nakajima	1'21.825	1'19.546 ■
17	30	A Suzuki	1'22.281	1'19.832 ■
18	25	T Boutsen	1'23.197	1'19.868 ■
19	22	J J Lehto	1'22.243	1'19.954 ■
20	23	P Martini	1'22.852	1'20.175 ■
21	24	G Morbidelli	1'26.147	1'20.502 ■
22	11	M Hakkinen	1'25.587	1'20.611 ■
23	26	E Comas	1'22.682	1'21.168 ■
24	17	G Tarquini	1'23.618	1'21.219 ■
25	8	M Blundell	1'23.547	1'21.230 ■
26	7	M Brundle	1'23.271	1'21.280 ■
DNQ	10	A Caffi	1'25.555	1'22.190 ■
DNQ	18	S Johansson	1'24.698	1'22.432 ■
DNQ	9	M Alboreto	1'25.795	1'22.730 ■

Warm-up

Pos	No	Driver	Time
1	5	N Mansell	1'20.436
2	27	A Prost	1'20.635
3	1	A Senna	1'20.841
4	28	J Alesi	1'20.991
5	2	G Berger	1'21.125
6	19	N Piquet	1'21.280
7	6	R Patrese	1'21.330
8	20	R Moreno	1'22.473
9	11	M Hakkinen	1'22.613
10	23	P Martini	1'22.887
11	32	B Gachot	1'23.051
12	33	A de Cesaris	1'23.144
13	24	G Morbidelli	1'23.161
14	29	E Bernard	1'23.270
15	4	R Modena	1'23.424
16	16	I Capelli	1'23.580
17	26	E Comas	1'23.587
18	15	M Gugelmin	1'23.669
19	21	E Pirro	1'23.808
20	25	T Boutsen	1'23.873
21	22	J J Lehto	1'24.420
22	3	S Nakajima	1'25.053
23	7	M Brundle	1'25.319
24	8	M Blundell	1'26.224
25	17	G Tarquini	-
26	30	A Suzuki	-

Entry List

No	Driver	Team	No	Driver	Team
1	A Senna	BRA McLaren Honda	19	R Moreno	BRA Benetton Ford
2	G Berger	AUT McLaren Honda	20	N Piquet	BRA Benetton Ford
3	S Nakajima	JAP Tyrrell Honda	21	E Pirro	ITA Scuderia Italia Judd
4	S Modena	ITA Tyrrell Honda	22	J J Lehto	FIN Scuderia Italia Judd
5	N Mansell	GBR Williams Renault	23	P Martini	ITA Minardi Ferrari
6	R Patrese	ITA Williams Renault	24	G Morbidelli	ITA Minardi Ferrari
7	M Brundle	GBR Brabham Yamaha	25	T Boutsen	BEL Ligier Lamborghini
8	M Blundell	GBR Brabham Yamaha	26	E Comas	FRA Ligier Lamborghini
9	M Alboreto	ITA Footwork Porsche	27	A Prost	FRA Ferrari
10	A Caffi	ITA Footwork Porsche	28	J Alesi	FRA Ferrari
11	M Hakkinen	FIN Lotus Judd	29	E Bernard	FRA Larrousse Ford
12	J Bailey	GBR Lotus Judd	30	A Suzuki	JAP Larrousse Ford
14	O Grouillard	FRA Fondmetal Ford	31	P Chaves	POR Coloni Ford
15	M Gugelmin	BRA Leyton House Ilmor	32	B Gachot	BEL Jordan Ford
16	I Capelli	ITA Leyton House Ilmor	33	A de Cesaris	ITA Jordan Ford
17	G Tarquini	ITA AGS Ford	34	N Larini	ITA Modena Lamborghini



○ Fastest lap: Mansell 1'20.436 (193.570kph)

Drivers World Championship

Pos	Driver	Total	USA	BRA
1	A Senna	20	10	10
2	A Prost	9	6	3
3	R Patrese	6	-	6
4	N Piquet	6	4	2
5	G Berger	4	-	4
6	S Modena	3	3	-
7	S Nakajima	2	2	-
8	A Suzuki	1	1	-
	J Alesi	1	-	1

Non-pre-qualifiers

- Pedro Chaves had a fuel pump problem, oversteer on his first set of qualifiers and Van de Poele in his way on his final run.
- Gachot blew his engine by missing a gear on his final lap but made the cut.
- Larini had a fuel pressure problem and Van de Poele was simply not quick enough.
- Grouillard reported an improvement from a new gearbox and rear suspension but he spun after nine laps and reverted to the old car which wasn't quick enough.

Non-qualifiers

- Alex Caffi damaged his undertray and found A11C with Porsche engine too slow.
- Johansson tried hard but team underpowered, underfinanced, and car oversteering.
- Alboreto had gearbox problems Friday and a spin Saturday. Porsche engine too heavy.
- Julian Bailey had an alternator fire and an upright problem on Saturday and had to use Hakkinen's car.

Constructors World Championship

Pos	Team	Total	USA	BRA
1	McLaren Honda	24	10	14
2	Ferrari	10	6	4
3	Benetton Ford	6	4	2
	Williams Renault	6	-	6
5	Tyrrell Honda	5	5	-
6	Lola Ford	1	1	-

LAT



Prost, Ferrari - only in the race morning warm-up did the 642s shine

from Tyrrell on December 1, had cost it dearly.

Alesi was more subdued than he was in Phoenix as he took his first point for the Prancing Horse, but even more obtrusive was Berger's third place, a much needed fillip for the Austrian who is now thoroughly eclipsed at McLaren by his illustrious team mate.

Benetton left Brazil rueing its decision to opt, once again, for too hard a Pirelli compound, but bucked by the performance and reliability of the B190B in what was scheduled to be its last outing before John Barnard's B191 was unveiled early in April. Again, though, Piquet overshadowed Roberto Moreno, and after the race began the whispers that his future might not be as secure as expected.

The other Ford HB user, Team

7UP Jordan, again made a serious impression, prequalifying both 191s this time and then watched Bertrand Gachot lead Andrea de Cesaris in seventh and eighth places until electrical problems sidelined both just as the points began to look a definite possibility. Larrousse, too, looked good for a while as Eric Bernard recovered from an early tyre stop caused by a puncture. While team mate Aguri Suzuki was pushed off the grid with no fuel pressure, Bernard coped with a misfire which eventually cleared and was running strongly until the clutch's hydraulic pipe split. Once again, however, Gerard was able to thumb his nose as Guy Ligier's dreadful JS35s struggled. Erik Comas made his GP debut but retired after spinning over a kerb and damaging an oil line led to engine failure. Boutsen

dragged his 10 cylinder, brakeless Ligier home in 10th place that may yet prove valuable in the avoidance of prequalifying later in the season. Just as in Phoenix, the Belgian's car had further clutch release bearing trouble to boot. And in last year's race he was a front-running contender for Williams...

The manner in which Jordan, Larrousse and Lotus performed in both the opening GPs was an interesting insight into what can be done with limited finances. As the Ligier monolith stumbled on, all three showed what can be achieved when all eyes are focussed on the same target. Losing Lamborghini looks to be a blessing in disguise for Larrousse, whose Lola 191s handle better and go quicker with Brian Hart's DFR developments engines, while in



Piquet, trouble in the wet on Friday, but 7th on the grid after Saturday



*Above: Senna prepares for his 54th pole
Right: Mansell - could he have won from this position?*



Mika Hakkinen Team Lotus clearly has a star of the future. After Phoenix, Brazil saw him take a solid ninth place in a drive that saw him overtaking a lot of rivals. Team mate Julian Bailey remained unlucky, though, again unable to qualify after a host of practice problems.

Leyton House may have the bucks, but it has yet to have the Buck Rogers to go with them even if the Ilmor V10 looks the part. Internal squabbling led to blood-letting after the race, in which Gugelmin succumbed early to the pain of chemical burns sustained in the early morning warm-up when the onboard fire extinguisher went off. Capelli, as is his wont, qualified well down but raced much better until the engine let go. Already, both are rumoured to be looking elsewhere for 1992 employment.

Disappointment curtailed another promising qualifying show from Dallara, with Pirro delayed by a first lap nudge and Lehto losing power right from the start with an alternator problem. Minardi at least had Morbidelli's eighth place (minus third or fourth gears) to savour, but Martini, in trouble now for saying one night in Brazil that he wants to drive for an English team, spun into retirement when running just ahead of Gianni. Brabham got through all of its Yamaha V12s as the weekend progressed, some not even getting out onto the track due to minor electronics-related problems. Brundle, barely seen all weekend, survived a very uncomfortable run to take 12th, thoroughly cramped in the cockpit, while Blundell ran ahead of him until his V12 exploded. AGS, still hanging by a thread, had

Tarquini qualify yet again, but a nudge on the first lap put him in the wall.

Such disappointments, however, were nothing to Tyrrell's, whose performance was perhaps the most disappointing of the lot. So far the combination of the 019-derived 020 and the Honda V10 have not yet produced the expected form, and neither has Stefano Modena. One can understand Nakajima falling off trying to race the Ligiers, but the Italian wrecked a car comprehensively in qualifying and would later blot his copybook with two further accidents testing at Imola. A broken gear linkage on lap 20 put him out of a misery that had him struggling to stay in the wake of Prost's unhappy Ferrari.

FIA
RACE NUMBER 2
SAO PAULO
MARCH 24TH 1991

ALLSPORT/IRONDEAU



MY RACE WEEKEND: TREVOR POPE

Ayrton Senna's victory at Interlagos on March 24 was his 28th and a milestone in his career which prompted celebrations all around Sao Paulo. For his tyre suppliers Goodyear, it was also an historic race, bringing their 250th triumph in Grand Prix racing. To mark the occasion, GPE invited Goodyear's Tyre Fitter Foreman Trevor Pope (left) to describe his life and his 'Grand Prix Weekend'....

"I live in Cannock, about 10 miles north of Wolverhampton in the English midlands. For this race, in Brazil, we all left home on Sunday and arrived on Monday lunchtime. We flew Sunday overnight on Swissair from Geneva. It was alright, even in cattle class! I am used to the travel and enjoy it. It is one of the attractions of the work for me.

"I have been with Goodyear since the early 1980's. I was with Dunlop in 1981, for one year, and came back here the year after and have stayed ever since. It is my job to organise the fitting and mounting of the tyres, to keep control of the stock in the garage and to control all the general logistics of the operation. I am a sort of organiser and controller of the job we all do for Goodyear.

"It can be a bit demanding particularly with all the long-haul travel, but I like it. I am not married, but I have a steady girlfriend and she understands okay. We do not travel much together, but we meet up after the Spanish Grand Prix each year and have a holiday together. That always helps. She comes to the British Grand Prix too, of course, at Silverstone.

"She puts up with it alright. She copes. Our routine is quite tough. When we arrive we are tired, so we like to get a rest. Monday is our free day to recuperate really, but you just feel very tired. We stay at the Metropolitan Plaza Hotel. Not bad at all - it does us alright. Usually, all the lads go out for a meal on the Monday night and then early to bed.

"On Tuesday, I come in here - to the circuit - to sort out the 2,200

tyres we've got here and the equipment and generally get prepared for the weekend ahead. We are all in by about 9.30 in the morning. By all of us, I mean the 15 fitters over from England, the four engineers and Barry and Lee on the management side.

"I like to try the local places to eat the dishes of the country we are in. I'm more adventurous than some of the lads and they think I am a bit of a gourmet. Then bed again. It is much the same on Wednesday, except that we really start to work on mounting tyres. I think we did about 400 on the Wednesday morning this week.

"We did the C's for the race. We collect them from the stores, lay them down and fit them to the wheels which each team brings in. They have to be mounted and then inflated and balanced. The simplest mistake would be to put the wrong tyre on the wrong wheel. Someone has to keep a close check and look carefully at the tyres when they are being inflated. You could have one that has been damaged in shipping. A little part could be cut or broken, the tyre wall perhaps, and this could really be dangerous.

"The tyre pressures are set after consultations between the teams and our engineers. A lot of talk goes on before the decisions are taken. This weekend we had 2,236 tyres here in all. A lot of tyres! The B's are the hardest ones, the C's are the main race tyres, the D's are for the pre-qualifiers and then there are the qualifying tyres and the wets. It is a lot to think about when there are changing weather conditions.

"We carry on preparing on Wednesday. In Europe, of course, we would do it all on Thursday and not have the extra days. We all feel a lot of competition. There are lap records to be considered, the race results of course and comparisons with other meetings in previous years. You need to be fit and tough for the job. It is a demanding job and it can be very hard work, physically. Working on the fitting table is the worst.

"I think the wheel and tyre combination must weigh about 20 kilos and there are usually about two or three guys there. They handle them all and if you divide 850 by three... well, it is quite a weight. By Friday morning, the engineers have done their work consulting the teams and made a programme for the weekend. So many sets of this and that. It is all decided.

"Here, it was fortunate on Friday morning that each team had a back-up of three sets of wets. One for each car and one spare. It really rained heavily and they needed them. Sometimes, at times like that, it gets really hectic. The guys come rushing in and all want it done immediately.

"The worst I can remember was in Rio in 1987 or 1986, when it rained suddenly on Sunday morning. We had to work all the time that day and had only half an hour's break in 13 hours. But it is just part of the job, like it was here on Friday. After that it is just pretty routine.

"Pirelli's return to F1 has meant a lot more competition, more people at the races and more compounds. More work. I am here on Sunday morning early after getting



Yes, it was wet in Brazil

on the road for 5.30 a.m. It is a long day and we deserve a good night out at the end. Winning the 250th race for Goodyear means a night out with the boys and a bit of a celebration, then bed as usual,

and away and home on the plane again on Monday. By the time you arrive home again, you feel awful... That never changes after a long flight."

Sprawling and squalid, South America's fastest growing city hosted the Brazilian Grand Prix. And Monaco nights! But the day-life can be made up for the nights after dark...

■ PICTURES BY STEVEN TEE.

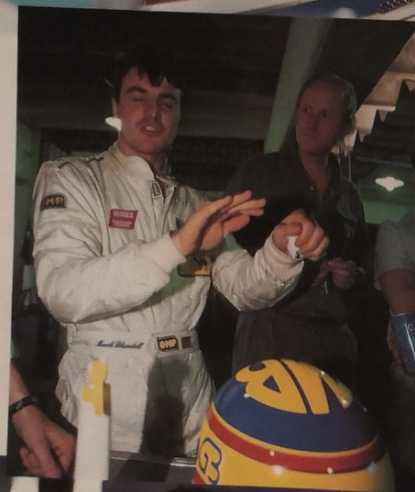


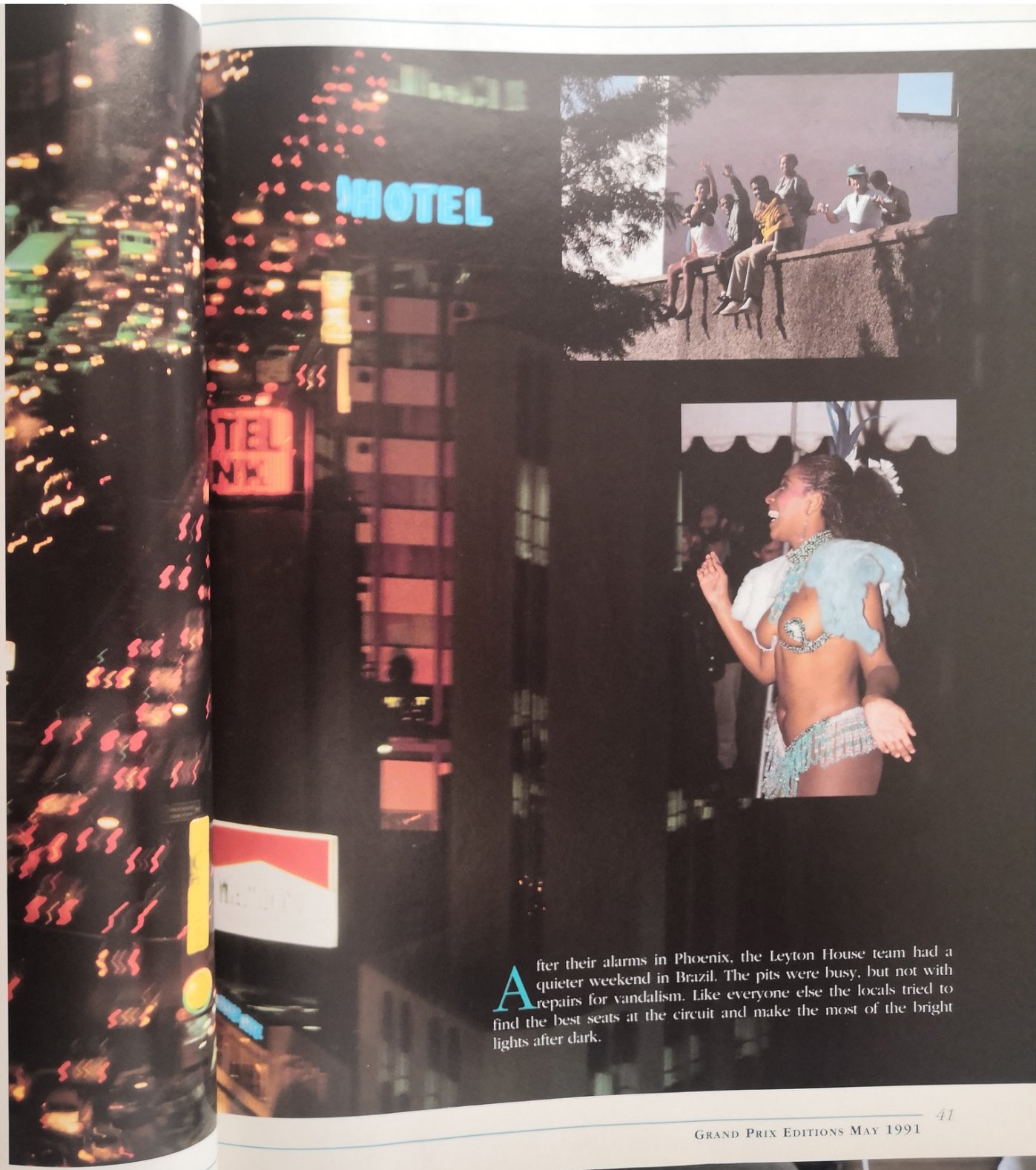
A POSTCARD FROM...

...SAO PAULO



It was wet on Friday and no one was happy. Ivan Capelli had a few points to make. Mark Blundell looked for inspiration from his helmet and Riccardo Patrese looked... well, just plain glum. It was even worse for Nigel Mansell. He went out for a lap in the wet and came upon it. It was an unhappy hour and Nigel needed a push.

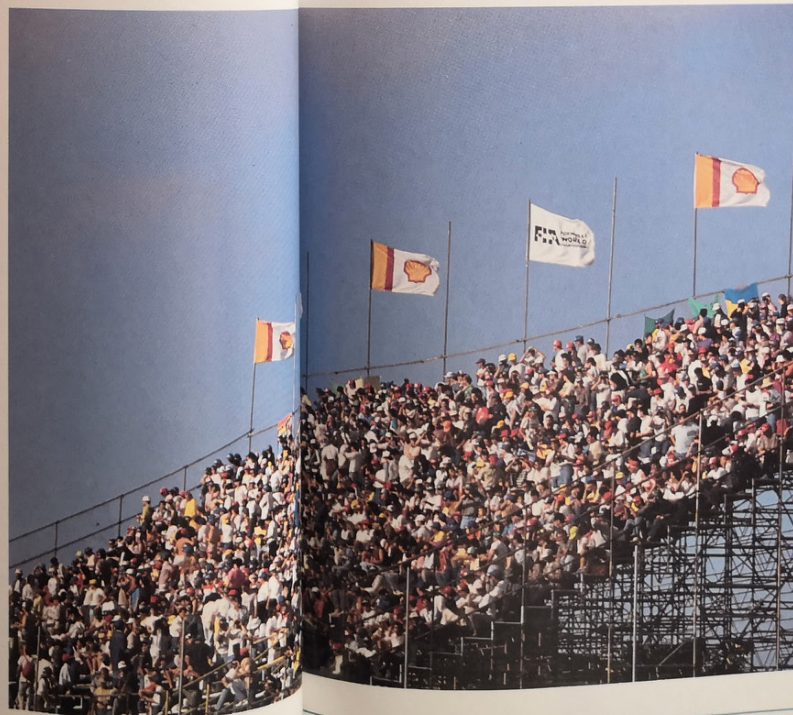




After their alarms in Phoenix, the Leyton House team had a quieter weekend in Brazil. The pits were busy, but not with repairs for vandalism. Like everyone else the locals tried to find the best seats at the circuit and make the most of the bright lights after dark.

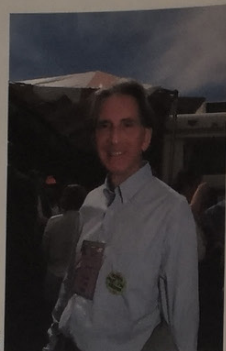


For one man, of course, Sao Paulo is somewhere special - home. And Ayrton made the most of it this year by giving the flag-waving crowd a taste of their own medicine and a victory. The Brazilian ace was 31 on the Thursday before the race and it was a great way for him to celebrate his birthday.





CRITICAL CONSIDERATIONS: JOHN WATSON



■ BY JOHN WATSON

Two or three years ago, everyone could not wait to rush off to Brazil for two weeks pre-season testing and a chance to enjoy the sunshine and the other pleasures Rio de Janeiro had to offer. Now, however, we arrive in Brazil at the last possible moment and aim to leave after the race on Sunday night. Sao Paulo, quite simply, does not offer the same excitement, glamour or colour as Rio did in representing Brazil...

The reasons for selecting and racing on different tracks in the World Championship are not an open secret in Formula One. Rio was always a popular place to start the year and the change to Interlagos came as a surprise to most people and a disappointment to everyone. Also, by making Brazil the second Grand Prix of the year, FISA effectively destroyed the pre-season build-up period which had an added attraction in the past. Instead of feeling like a new season, these two season-opening races in the United States and in Brazil feel like an extension of last year. The true spirit of the 1991 championship will not unfold until Imola has hosted the San Marino Grand Prix.

Having said all that, Brazil was a triumph for Ayrton Senna who, after trying for the last seven years to win in his home country and more recently in his home town, at last enjoyed a satisfying victory. At least someone left Interlagos well and truly pleased with his day's work.

The most interesting feature of the Brazilian Grand Prix for me was the performance of the Williams-Renaults which proved to be the fastest cars over the weekend. This takes nothing away from Senna. His contribution to any victory is always remarkable, but as I have said often in the past, the overall strength of McLaren-Honda is so complete that even if Senna is not driving the fastest car the team can still win the race.

To win two races on the trot with a brand new car and the new Honda V12 engine is extraordinary

and it is difficult not to overstress that achievement. What the McLaren team did at Phoenix and Sao Paulo was very impressive. It is important to recognise the part Ron Dennis's team plays to enable Senna to win the races. You do not need to be a Sennaphile or a McLarenphile, and nor do I, to recognise their massive achievements. You need only to have your eyes and ears open.

So, the two outstanding teams in Sao Paulo were McLaren and Williams. Ferrari were a big disappointment. After Phoenix, they were to be heard grumbling about that circuit, suggesting that once they returned to the 'real' and 'natural' racing circuits on the calendar, all would be well again. Well, Interlagos is as real in that sense as any circuit to be used this year and Ferrari had their Italian doors well and truly blown off.

I do not know if there is an Italian equivalent to Japanese composure, but certainly the kind of controlled rationale that Ferrari need to be applying to rectify their problems has become a dire and urgent necessity. The Italian team suffers from a kind of factionism with the drivers, Alain Prost particularly, battling with team manager Cesare Fiorio to control the destiny of what really should be the most unbeatable and majestic team in Formula One.

I suppose the difference between the Italian mentality and that of the others is the part played by passion and politics and not just cold rational thinking. Sometimes, the politics within Ferrari appear to mirror that of

Machiavelli. In fact, Italian politics are almost worthy of private study in this connection as there are more political opinions in Italy than gearchanges during the Monaco Grand Prix.

What happens at Ferrari is always hamstrung by politics with each faction looking to its own ends. Prost is trying to bring stability, but by doing so he is fuelling this situation. He is, of course, highly political himself, but he does not seem to have natural allies. It was

very different for Niki Lauda who during his years at Maranello in the mid-1970's enjoyed the support of Luca di Montezemolo. They worked together in the 1974-1975 period and produced results not seen since at Ferrari. Only Jody Scheckter's World Championship win more than a decade ago has seen Maranello enjoy similar glory days.

Since the 'Old Man' died, there has been no 'Old Man' to take his place and instead a lot of power struggles. With their potential,

Ferrari should be blitzing every-one year in and out. But, after two races this year, McLaren and Senna were 11 points clear of Prost and Ferrari.

It is likely that other drivers and teams are going to win races and so dilute the challenge to Senna, a situation which is sure to satisfy and please Ron Dennis. Williams, for example, and Benetton are also likely race-winners and will in the process water down Prost's challenge. Prost may find it very diffi-



Alain Prost, out on his own with Ferrari

cult to catch up in the way in which he has in past years when there has been really only these two men going for the title.

As I write, Formula One is faced with the prospect of losing two teams, which would be a considerable blow to motor racing. As a result of loss of sponsors, points and finance, both AGS and Larrousse are on insecure ground. The rest of the pre-qualifiers may be happy at the likely loss of the Friday morning sessions, in particular the two most impressive teams so far this season, Scuderia Italia and Jordan, both of which have made considerable impact.

What Eddie Jordan's team has achieved in two Grands Prix has been remarkable and it has clearly marked him out as being a natural clone of Ron Dennis both commercially and in terms of being an achiever in Formula One. I will spare his blushes by only adding that Formula One needs more people of his calibre because eventually the old guard must fade away. Just as it is important to the teams to bring in young fresh driving talent, so it is important to Grand

Prix racing to ensure new teams come in. Entry to F1 is one of the most difficult challenges in sport and every hurdle makes Beechers Brook look easy, by comparison. The initiation is both difficult and painful but I sincerely hope there are more Eddie Jordans and Ron Dennises out there ready to come. We need you.

Two new cars will be introduced at Imola - the Benetton B191, which will be the first produced by John Barnard in his time with the team, and the new Footwork Porsche. The more revolutionary part of the Benetton is not in its aerodynamics, but in the construction of the chassis as achieved by the man who pioneered the introduction of carbonfibre technology to Formula One. With the increasing horsepower of the Ford HB engine, one of the most significant advantages that Nelson Piquet and Roberto Moreno will enjoy will be to drive a 'bantam-weight' car with the punch of a 'super-heavy-weight'. Thanks to the frugal nature of the Ford HB engine, it can start some Grands Prix with up to 10 gallons less fuel than its thirstier 10

or 12-cylinder rivals.

Even with regular pump fuelling of about 70 pounds, this would represent a weight advantage in the early part of a race and coupled with the development by Pirelli expected from Imola onwards, this will prove to be a significant factor this season.

The Footwork-Porsche is designed by Alan Jenkins who worked with John Barnard at McLaren and who is the originator of the now mandatory Coke-bottle shape used by everyone. This is Jenkins' second design, but unfortunately it will not benefit from a light and compact engine. The Porsche V12 motor weighs at least 80 lbs more than the Ford HB V8. That means that with full fuel loads at the start of a race, Benetton-Ford could be up to 150 lbs lighter, putting the Footwork-Porsche at a major weight disadvantage. It is unlikely that we shall see any significant change to the Porsche engine until around the time of the German Grand Prix at Hockenheim in August. Therefore one must say Porsche see F1 as a long-distance project.

IN MY VIEW

OPINIONS AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Grand Prix Editions welcomes all letters to the editor and contributions of written opinions on any aspect of Formula One. Letters will be edited and may be reproduced in whole or part. None of the views expressed reflect the views of the magazine.

Please write to: The Editor, Grand Prix Editions, 174 New Bond Street, London W1Y 9PB.

WHY NOT JOIN THE GRAND PRIX CLUB?

Sir,

I am an avid reader of Grand Prix Editions and have every one of your magazines from Issue no. 1 in 1987 when it was called *Prix Editions*.

I was interested to read Lesley Gunn's letter on page 51 of your March 1991 issue. She called for a pen-pal column. This sounds a reasonable idea. Maybe you have heard about the Grand Prix Contact Club which I founded over five years ago. We have members from 40 countries and its chief purpose is to enable F1 enthusiasts to make contacts.

Upon enrolment, each member receives a complete Who's Who of members world wide which shows names, addresses, ages, languages spoken, favourite drivers and teams, particular interests in collecting etc. The Who's Who is particularly useful for those who collect programmes, autographs, books, posters, stickers, magazines etc.

Additionally members receive a monthly newsletter to which I invite contributions: race reports, free advertisements for sale and wanted, and there are other interesting things included also, like special offers.

Could you please find room in your next "In My View" to publicise the GPCC. I operate the club as a spare time interest and it is non-profit making.

David Hayhoe
26, Broom Road,
Shirley, Croydon, CR0 8NE

GRATEFUL WORDS FROM A HAPPY AUTOGRAPH HUNTER

Sir,

For well over a year I have been putting together a collection of autographs from racing driver from all forms of motor sport, and from all over the world. Many of them have been collected by post as work and finance will not allow me to attend as many race meetings as I would like to. The response to my letters has been little short of fantastic, I have over 200 autographs, including eight World Champions', Formula Three champions', BTCC driver's champion and the autograph of the world land-speed record holder Richard Noble.

Would it be at all possible for me, through your pages, to pass on my thanks to all the people in motor sport who have helped and inspired me to keep striving for an even larger collection of autographs, and please give a special mention for Mr. John Brannigan, (of John Brannigan International), who after receiving my letter took the time and trouble while at the great Indy 500 race to collect autographs on my behalf and then to deliver them in person to my home.

Also, to all those people to whom I have not yet made contact, rest assured I may do in the future, as I hope to have one of the biggest collections in the world. I hope that you continue to print one of the best magazines on the market on motor sport and hope that you may start a Pen-Pal section, as suggested in Vol.5 No.1, by Lesley

Gunn on your letters page. Subscribing to your magazine was the best thing I've done in years. No more missing issues from the newsagent. May I thank you very much for your help and may Grand Prix Editions long continue.

Mr. Barrie Clucas,
19, Townsway,
Cuerden Green,
Lostock Hall,
Preston, PR5 5YQ,
Lancashire, England.

MY GENERAL ADMISSION PHOTOGRAPHY

Sir,

Bigger, Brighter and Better than ever...

That is absolutely true. The new outfit is just outrageous!!!

I was amazed that you could still improve a magazine, as fine as PEI was last year, this much. I had suggested to you to have more driver profiles and even that is taken care of in your first smashing issue of the season.

You probably remember me; I am the guy who wrote the tribute to Sandro, who is a keen photographer as well. Thankyou very much for publishing my Nannini picture; my pen-pals seem to love that picture.

As you may recall I made an offer to supply you with pictures that you might publish anywhere free of charge. In order to keep your interests alive I decided to send you some other pics, so that



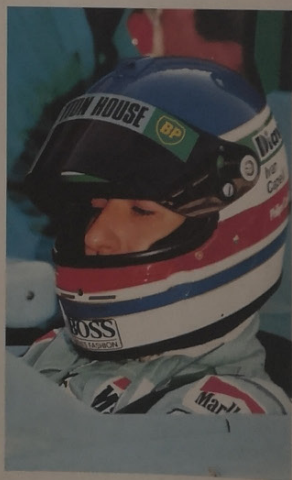
John Barnard's new car is launched

you can see whether my picture-taking abilities can at least match the quality of your magazine. My friends are saying that there is no doubt about it and I hope that you share their thoughts.

I am sure that you will have a profile on Alesi in the near future and to 'picture' his Tyrrell season you can use the shot taken at Francorchamps '90.

Since I am always limited to what I call 'general admission photography', I am never able to make in-car close ups. I have had this opportunity only once; last year, when Capelli was testing at Zandvoort, I sneaked into the pits and some of the results are included as well. The little ones are printed a little bit too dark, as was the case with the Nannini picture, but the negatives are just fine.

Frank Simonis,
Klein Doesburg 24,
8181, ZL Heerde,
The Netherlands.



Andrea de Cesaris Fan Club member, Alasdair Dunsmuir from Scotland. This photo was taken at the Belgian GP in August 1990. It may be of interest that this photo may be of interest that this photo has sparked a lot of interest in de Cesaris, especially now that he has secured the drive at Jordan. A lot of people have contacted me to express their opinions that de Cesaris get a lot of undeserved criticisms for his mistakes but he never moans and whinges like a lot of F1 'superstars' who will blame everyone under the sun for their mistakes on the track. At Phoenix de Cesaris 'hooked' the wrong gear, but was honest enough to put up his hand and admit that he had made a mistake, how many drivers on the grid would do this? Remember he had not got a lot of miles in on the new Jordan and hooked the wrong gear going over a bump.

Andrea now has the best car under him since the Alfa-Romeo of 1982/83 when he got a pole in the U.S. Grands Prix and two seconds in South Africa and at the German GP. So far the Jordan looks very good and I do believe that Andrea does have a GP win in him, maybe not on the 'power' circuits but at the narrower slower circuits. People say he's been in F1 for 10 years and never won a race, but after 10 years in F1 his commitment to driving quick and not just making up the numbers on the grid is still 100%.

Stephen Wade,
Andrea de Cesaris Fan Club,
47, Ballard Estate,
Four Lanes, Redruth,
Cornwall, TR16 6QL.

GIVE HERBERT A CHANCE

Sir,

When will Johnny Herbert get the chance he deserves? There was a slim hope of him getting a drive at Jordan and an even slimmer hope of a Benetton drive. The

Benetton number two seat went to Moreno, and rightly so, but it is the Jordan issue that is most distressing. I have long been an admirer of what Eddie Jordan has done at other levels of motor racing and I was more than delighted when he announced that he was entering F1 and I wish him a long and successful stay. I also believe that he will make an excellent contributor to GPE. But following Gachot who should he sign as his second driver ahead of Herbert and other young hopefuls but de Cesaris!

Andrea is a slow, accident-prone, back of the grid style driver. While Herbert is a fast young driver who, unlike some of his young rivals, also has the added advantage of already having some experience in F1. Remember, Herbert finished 4th in only his first GP joining Alain Prost at the time as the only two drivers to have achieved such a feat in the last decade. Following this superb debut he finished a fantastic 5th after starting from the back of the grid at the tight Phoenix circuit! And whenever he has had a drive since then he has always done a sterling job, despite the machinery not always being up to scratch, dispelling any doubts about his previous injuries.

Poor Johnny hasn't even got the temporary Lotus drive while Donnelly completes his miraculous injury comeback. That drive has gone to Julian Bailey and ironically neither he nor de Cesaris qualified for the season's opening GP!

Maybe one of these days someone in F1 will remove their blinkers, take a look around, and notice all the talented drivers they are missing out on. Certainly when someone like de Cesaris gets a drive ahead of Herbert and Warwick it is on the merits of the Marlboro sponsorship he carries and not on the merits of the quality of the driver!

Shaun R. Dixon,
"Wanta", Sibsey Road,
Boston, PE21 9QX,
Lincolnshire, England.

OPINION: STUART SYKES A POSTCARD FROM THE EDGE

It was billed as "The Thunder of Paradise". It was also widely advertised and marketed as the "The Gold Coast Indycar Grand Prix", which did not go down too well with the organisers of the real thing in Adelaide. You don't need to be Aristotle - or even Bernie Ecclestone - to work out that media hype was being built up on South Australian coat tails as Surfers Paradise got ready to stage the first CART race outside North America for 14 years.

When the cars got out on the track, the uninformed could have been forgiven for thinking this was, indeed, Formula One: weren't there two drivers shaking fists at each other before the wretched race had even started? And the epoch-making race itself? General reaction took two directions. Firstly, puzzlement bordering on frustration: why were there so many yellow flags (more than 20% of the race was under go-slow orders), and what was this brand new racing where a man could work so hard, get so far in front and then find a pace car dragging the rest of the field back up to gearbox? Secondly, a form of low-key contentment: this was a "fun" event, American-style where entertainment was the order of the day rather than a serious die of sport - and certainly not as serious as anything run by far-off FISA.

If that were not enough to sow seeds of doubt in the minds of those who thought that this really was a Grand Prix, then surely the sheer accessibility of the personalities - team managers, drivers - must have shown them the error of their ways? A week before we had seen the spectacle of Phoenix's Formula One season opener, but there was absolutely no sense of any of the personalities that might give this mechanical extravaganza just a hint of human face. Even ESPN's brave attempts to get into the Phoenix pits and talk to drivers as they fell off came up against a language barrier which CART does not present to an Aussie audience ("Sorry, Eric, what the hell is an oil canalisation box?", was the reaction when Bernard was trying to explain that an oil line broke.)

Mind you, Channel 9 lost points by slipping some crass errors into its Indycar coverage. New to Australian motor racing fans, the pumped-up commentator informed us, were pop-off valves and the mysterious role they played: so much for

the turbo era in F1... After a build up the laid much stress on the ever-present threat of high-speed accidents in CART's concrete encased formula, Messrs Unser, Andretti Sr and Cheever duly obliged with their own antics at one of SP's very narrow chicanes. While Mario could console himself with John's eventual victory, the accident highlighted two of the track's main problems: the large number of blind corners, and the tendency for gravel to be dragged very quickly onto the surface if any car did get itself off line.

The local media, as always in the honeymoon period, rallied to the cause. "Adelaide, eat your heart out!" shrieked the Brisbane Courier-Mail, though Mike Drewer of the Australian Formula One Grand Prix Office showed few signs of self-induced indigestion when questioned about an event he had personally attended and summed-up even-handedly as "fun, but small-scale". "The promoters probably made the mistake of trying to say that form of racing is the equal to Formula One, or better", he went on. "I don't think they need to do that, they could stand on their own two feet and not make those comparisons because - by all measures - it's not."

While the official attendance was given as 60,000, the frequent overhead shots of empty grandstands and informed opinion from those on the ground suggested 40,000 was nearer the mark. South Australia's main concern, though, was the threat of losing its own race if the Gold Coast "Grand Prix" went ahead. "We can see absolutely no reason why there should be repercussion to the Grand Prix in Adelaide", was Drewer's conclusion, though he was speaking soon after the event and before FISA fall-out became public. Maybe the days of thunder were still to come? One particularly interesting test case - pardon the pun - concerned Michael Andretti, the only man driving with a foot in both camps at the moment, but Andretti has apparently been reassured by Ron Dennis that he has nothing to fear.

And the appellation "Grand Prix"? There is no need to worry. If the start of the race had looked familiar, the end was not: as soon as the top three finishers got on the podium and not only shook hands but actually smiled and talked to one another, you knew this couldn't possibly be Formula One...

Stuart Sykes,
Adelaide, Australia

IN DEFENCE OF ANDREA DE CESARIS

Sir,

In the last edition of Prix Editions in 1990 you published a photo of myself and another

PHILIPS

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Somerset. 99.5FM

London. 98.8FM

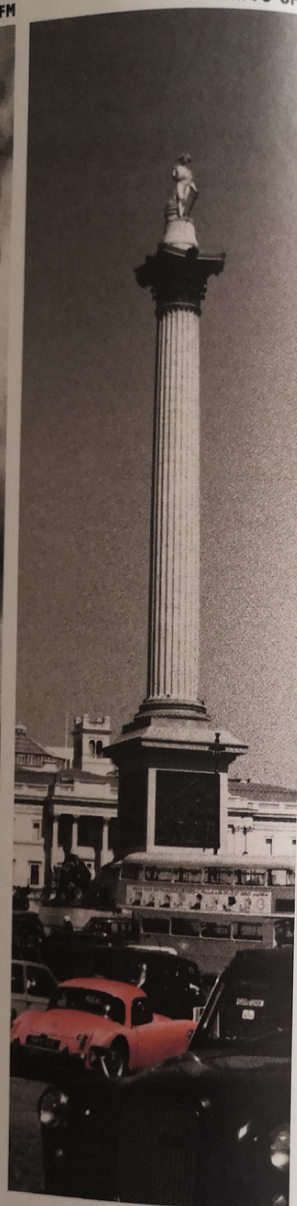
North Yorkshire. 98.9FM

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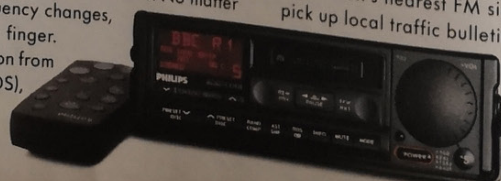
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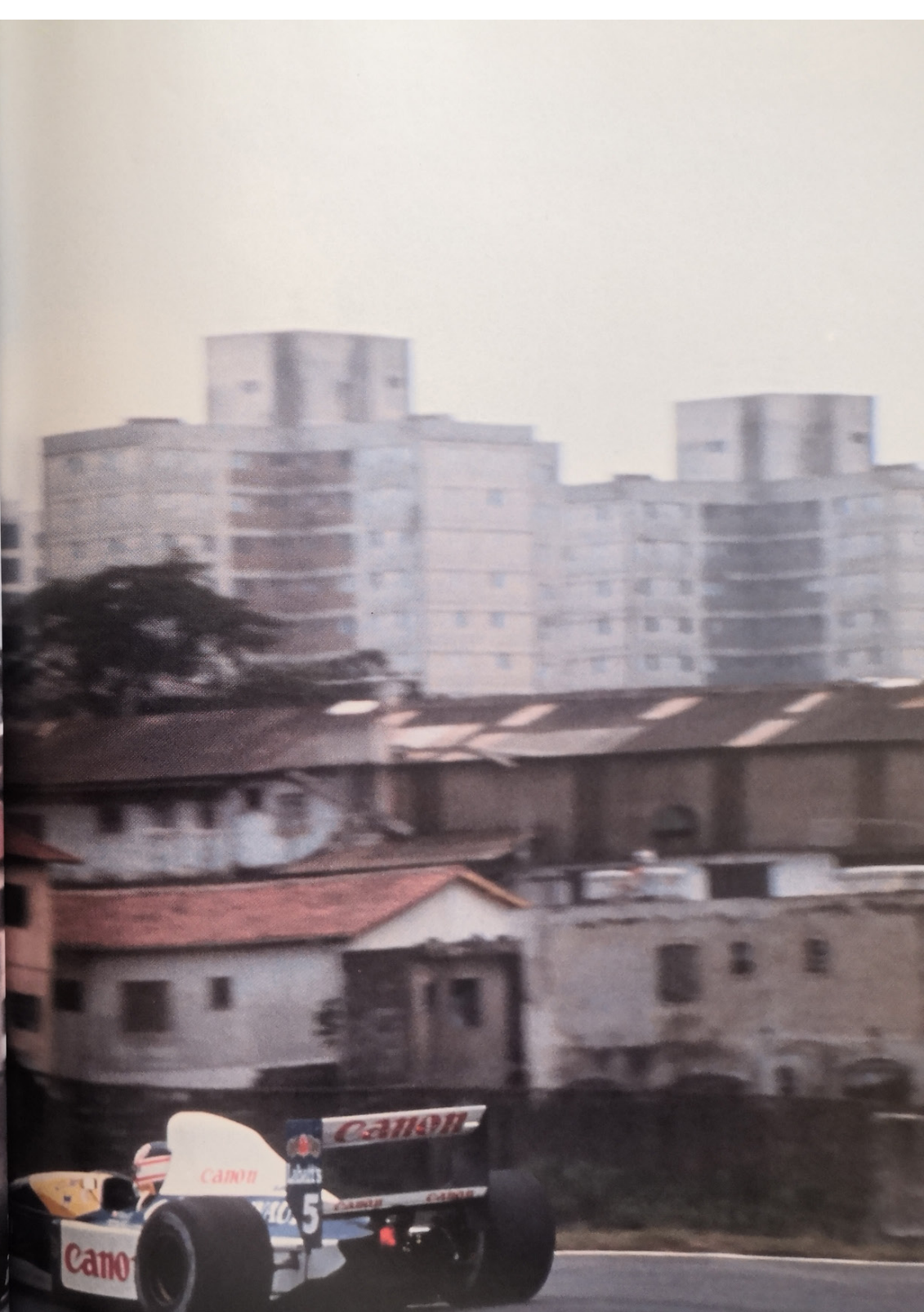
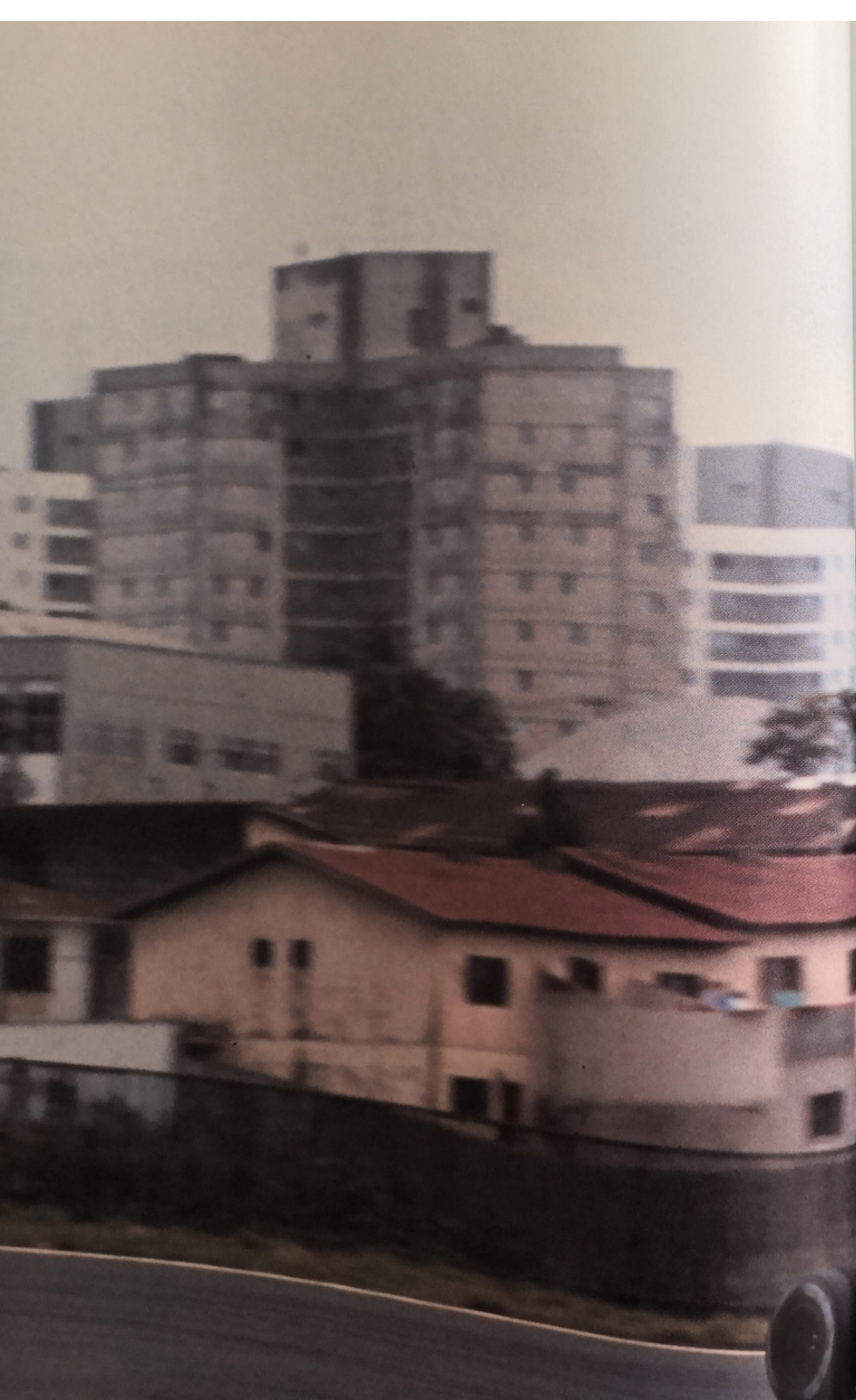
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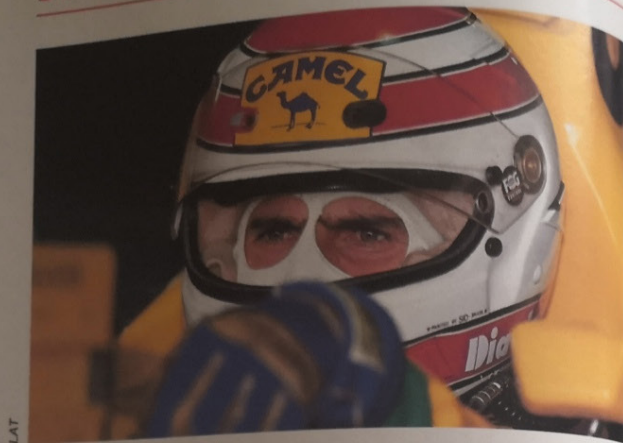
Is Nelson a Victim of his own Success?

Love him or loathe him, Nelson Piquet was - and still is - one of the great drivers and stars of Formula One. A man who provokes reactions with his outrageous humour and complex personality, he remains at the top despite some slips along the way.

■ BY MIKE DOODSON



DRIVER INTERVIEW: NELSON PIQUET



LAT

Before we go any further, let's get the confessions out of the way. I have known Nelson Piquet since before he left Brazil to come to Europe in 1977, and I like him. We're not friends in the sense that we go out to dinner every race weekend, but I always defend him when - as so often happens - he's under attack. He may not be as fast as Senna, but he has more humanity. He will never win as many GPs as Prost, but he is much more honest. Yes, I know that he gets beaten by Mansell, occasionally, but on balance I know which of them is the smarter guy.

This is not to say that Nelson is without fault. Oh no. He has some appalling personal habits. His sense of humour tends to involve water pistols and plastic doggie-dos. He tells filthy jokes and he can be terribly hurtful about other people's wives. But let's not forget that Fleet Street has to take the blame for enshrining those insults in print.

It all comes back to his honesty. "I didn't go racing in Europe for glory or to make a big name for myself," he told me last year. "I came because a couple of friends thought it was a good idea, and they found the sponsorship for me to do a season of F3. I would have been quite happy to go home at the end of 1977 with a bit of Italian and some nice memories.

But it all worked out differently..."

Sitting on an easy chair in his hotel suite in Sao Paulo, he is more relaxed than I have seen him since his 1987 world championship with Williams and Honda. Half an hour ago he finished qualifying at Interlagos, and Catherine Valentin, his lovely Belgian girlfriend, is busy fielding telephone calls in her excellent Portuguese. Although he's exhausted, Nelson wants to talk, and the emphasis which he puts into his words makes them count.

He is almost painfully candid about the way he has used his own ability. "In a professional way Prost did a better job than me," he admits, unprompted; "he's much more political than me, he always looked for the best car, and he won more Grands Prix. So you can say that because he did a better job, then he's better than me. But I don't think he'd be quicker than me, or he could set up a car better than me."

Nelson actually likes Prost. But he doesn't hesitate to point out the differences between them. "Alain never cared much about friendships in the team," he says; "when he was at Renault, he made a big mess there. I don't do that kind of thing."

What about Ayrton Senna? Instead of delivering the usual unspeakable sexual calumnies, Nelson discusses his fellow coun-



LAT

At home in Brazil, 1991

tryman objectively. "Well, his life is racing. Nothing else. He's driving very well, taking all that risk, and wants to drive racing cars and to be very famous. That's why he organises all the press so well. Yeah, he spends a lotta money on that. It's all done to put him in the papers."

But he is struggling for the English word which he needs to summarise Senna. With a little help from Catherine - who by a nice coincidence was Senna's squeeze for a brief period before taking up with Nelson - he finds the missing noun. It is "vanity..."

Is it possible that the divine visions vouchsafed to Senna make him feel indestructible? "If he is really like this, if he is that way, he is crazy," Nelson obviously thinks a lot about Senna. "I want to see what his life will be once he stops racing. Because there is much more to life than racing." Under his breath, he mutters, chillingly, "that guy is going to find a hard wall one day."

Paradoxically, it is Nelson's determination to enjoy himself away from racing which has earned him his reputation for being lazy and uncaring. In fact, it has kept him fresh and enthusiastic. And believe me, he is just as keen on being world champion again at 38 as he was ten years ago. So what went wrong?

To some extent, Nelson is a vic-

tim of his own success. He started winning races and world championships much earlier in his career than even Prost or Senna did, and somehow people expected the cascade of achievements to continue. Instead, while Prost's career went through the bad periods before his first world title, Nelson's hit tough times after he had already been champion twice.

He has only himself to blame for most of it. He tried to hide the fact that his accident at Imola in 1987 was affecting his driving throughout most of his last year at Williams. And he didn't do enough checking on the technical capacity of the Lotus team before he signed up for the Camel millions.

Like all of the sport's great drivers when they were new to F1, he had a few electrifying races to his credit with Brabham. But he never possessed the incendiary touch that earned such affection for the likes of Villeneuve and Mansell. If you count up the number of championships won by that approach, you'll know why he seems to be so careful. Like Hulme and Stewart, Fittipaldi and Lauda, he has the prosaic but effective gift of being able, and willing, to work with his engineers and to set up his car to be a winner.

He is the first to admit that it is a facility which he learned from Niki Lauda. "Before I drove for Brabham, I didn't know how to

express the problems I had with the car, and I had to listen to Niki's descriptions: 'when the car goes into the corner, it is rolling or understeering or oversteering, I tried to feel the same things so I could tell the engineers.'"

He was always close to the Austrian. Niki was fascinated by Nelson's ability to relax completely, even to fall asleep in the cockpit of his Brabham. In return, he taught his Brazilian friend about flying and the advantages to be had from owning your own plane. But to buy a plane you need money - and Niki taught Nelson about that, too.

"Niki told me that when he left Ferrari at the end of 1977, he was making something like \$160,000," recalls Nelson. "He went to drive for Brabham in 1978 for \$400,000, and the year after he drove for \$600,000. The next year he wanted \$1 million and they didn't pay him [because he had retired]. In those times, people talked of \$600,000 as money that you couldn't believe."

"Suddenly [in 1983], Niki came back... and he earned something like \$2.5 or \$3 million. And all the drivers' money went up. Now, I could tell Bernie, 'if Niki gets \$2 million, why should I accept \$500,000? I want a MINIMUM of \$2 million.' It's the same thing now with Senna. If Senna is really getting \$15 million, then next year - to negotiate - someone will be able to

go to Williams and say, 'OK, if you want me, I will drive for \$5 million less than Senna gets' - and he will still make \$10 million."

Wouldn't it therefore be a good idea for the top four or five drivers to gang up to force salaries higher? "Oh, we tried that once," responds Nelson, "and it didn't work. Keke, Prost, me and Niki got together at the end of 1985. But Keke screwed it up, because he said he was happy with Williams, then he signed for McLaren and he didn't tell Niki. So Niki retired anyway." Why not try it again, though? "Oh, it's very difficult, because I don't think Prost tells the truth in this kind of thing."

By the end of 1989, his second year at Lotus, Nelson's own \$6.5 million Camel salary dried up. He was considered lucky to be picked up by Benetton-Ford on a "payment by results" deal unprecedented in Formula 1. Certain British journalists were delighted to put the boot in as they phoned Ford's racing chief Michael Kranefuss to warn him what a mistake he was making.

"I am not interested in revenge. Of course, Australia was a good race for me to win like that. Not to show people that I could still do it, but for me personally."

Then, at the end of 1990, two unexpected victories put close to two million dollars of Benetton's bait money into Nelson's pocket. He lucked into the Japanese race after Senna had committed his famous professional foul on Prost. But the Australian win - at the expense, darn it, of the noble Mansell - was a scintillating achievement which sent his critics scabbling for excuses. Camel performed a spectacular backward somersault by offering him a fresh contract, and Benetton put him back on a regular salary. "We couldn't afford to keep him on the dollars-for-points arrangement," confesses John Barnard, the team's technical director.

Any other driver would have

been smug. Not Nelson, though. "I am not interested in revenge. Of course, Australia was a good race for me to win like that. Not to show people that I could still do it, but for me personally." And the press pun-dits who had been so scathing? "I know you journalists, but for more than 13 years I have not read anything in the papers. I don't even know what they write now."

"Of course, I know that sometimes people don't like me because I am too honest. I like to play, I like to enjoy myself, and I like to live every moment. But if I did not enjoy what I am doing, I would already have stopped. I have money enough, profit enough, to stop. Today I earn nearly one third of my income from business outside racing."

His antipathy towards the press is based on common sense. "Motor racing is something that is a fact, and everybody is present to see the facts. But if you read three different reports of the same GP, it is three different races. Every day, you read in the paper some crime

story where the press guy got ten per cent information and he made 90 per cent imagination. If I want to read imagination, I go and read books. Not papers."

The idea of Nelson curled up with a good book is about as bizarre as Alex Higgins signing the pledge. But anyone who knows him will confirm that he enjoys life far too much to waste time on worrying about what journalists write about him.

At the beginning of his career in F1, he enjoyed playing tricks on the Brabham mechanics so much that he once deliberately bailed out of his car during a Silverstone test session, just to see the looks of horror on their faces as it sailed past the pits, empty, like the Marie

Celeste. He totally misjudged the speed he was doing, and by all accounts he was lucky to escape with minor lacerations.

After seven relaxed years at Brabham, the fun-loving Brazilian was forced to become much more serious when he joined Williams and came up against Mansell in 1986. In the first year his disagreement was not so much with Mansell, though, as with team chief Frank Williams, with whom he had signed a "Number 1" agreement. When it came to racing, Williams just let his two drivers get on with it, as a result of which throughout 1986 they robbed each other of points. Everyone remembers Mansell's tyre blowing up in the final race at Adelaide: what gets forgotten is that by then, with the right discipline, the Williams team, and Nelson, could have had the title. Instead, it was lifted by McLaren and an incredulous Alain Prost.

As Nelson reminds us, he did not insist on being Number 1 at Williams. "It happened not because I demanded it but because I was offered that position, with a spare car and everything. Frank Williams offered me everything to take me from Brabham. And I accepted and I went. But afterwards, things were not done the way Frank Williams had offered me. And I got very upset."

"A big problem with Mansell was that I ended up doing all the dirty work - all the development of tyres, suspension - and after it was ready, he wanted to take advantage. But it was the same thing when Mansell was at Ferrari, after Prost joined: Mansell wanted to play golf, he wouldn't do anything, he always seemed to have little injuries to complain about... all because he didn't want to work."

"To be a champion, it's more than just being quick, it's also a question of knowing how to set up the car. But if you set up the car for somebody else, and it lets him have the same chance as you, that's not fair. It would be much more fair if every team had just one driver. Then you could do the job really well,

because you would have nothing to hide. But with two drivers, you always have to hide something."

Strangely enough, Nelson did not hesitate to deceive even Lauda in such matters. In 1979, weeks before the British GP at Silverstone, he calculated that by leaving first gear out of his Brabham's gearbox he would be able to shift just a little faster in qualifying (when he didn't need first gear). And the subterfuge put him in front of Lauda on the grid.

His memories of the times with Lauda remain fond. "He gave me horizons in other directions, because it is not easy to arrive in a team for the first year. And I don't think today there is any relationship between drivers like that."

Not quite. Nelson has deliberately offered the same Lauda-style kindness, which helped him in 1979, to Jean Alesi, who has become a friend and a regular traveller on Piquet's Lear jet. There have been murmurings that the older driver was angling to become Alesi's manager, but Alesi's decision to join Ferrari goes against all of Nelson's maverick reasoning. As he says, "Ferrari now is ten or eleven years without winning the championship. And in these eleven years I won the championship three times..."

"Jean is just a very good guy," he says: "he was lost when he got into F1, just like I was when I met Niki. I tried to back him up a little bit, because Niki did the same for me in those times. I have given him advice, but I never, never told him what decisions to make. I only offered him advice when he asked me for it."

At the age of 38, even Nelson admits that his time in F1 is drawing to its close. "Of course, if you didn't have any danger in this sport, for sure I would want to do this sport until 65 years old. But as time goes on it gets more important to know that you will be able to stop one day in good health and continue doing something different in life."

But what will he do? "If I did not have something interesting in

my life, I would be... well, not an alcoholic or anything like that, but I would probably get bored and become fat. Today, I never drink, I never took any drugs, I never tried anything. The only thing in my

blood is racing and more racing. Tomorrow, if I don't race anymore, I think I will try everything, to see what it is! If you've never tried it, you don't know what it is. I would like to know."



Mike Doodson's *Autocourse* biography of Nelson Piquet will be available from Hazleton Publishing on April 29

FACT FILE: NELSON PIQUET

Born Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on August 17, 1952.

Nationality Brazilian

Grand Prix debut Germany, 1978 (Ensign-Ford)

First Pole Position USA Long Beach, 1980 (Brabham-Ford)

First Win USA Long Beach, 1980 (Brabham-Ford)

Pole Positions 24 (to 22/4/91)

Wins 22 (to 22/4/91)

Races 189 (to 22/4/91)

Teams Ensign (1978), McLaren (1978), Brabham (1978 - 1985), Williams (1986 & 1987), Benetton (1990 -)

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DRIVER FEATURE: MIKA HAKKINEN

A Serious Young Man with Senna in his Sights

DRIVER FEATURE

Mika Hakkinen is not the first young driver to come into Formula One and declare his intention to reach the very top. The saga of broken dreams and misguided ambition is endless.

■ BY DERICK ALLSOP



FABRANT

Mika is a man with a mission

GRAND PRIX EDITIONS MAY 1991

There is something about Mika Hakkinen which makes you sit up and take note. It is not merely the conviction in his voice or, for that matter, the voice of Lotus team boss Peter Collins. It is not even the creditable performances he produced in his opening Grand Prix meetings.

It is something the sixth sense picks up, a feeling you get about very few hopefuls. It is an aura you cannot ignore, the aura of a winner.

Hakkinen is very serious about his work, very certain of his course. In others such self-assurance might amount to conceit, but not in the Finn. It is a matter-of-fact confidence, simple as that.

At the age of 22 he is the youngest in the Formula One field, though his maturity belies his years. He seems utterly at ease in this tough, often merciless business, but then he always believed he would be. He says: "To drive in Formula One has been my dream since I was 10. Now it is a dream no more and I feel that I belong here. I am with a good team and not only a good team - good people. That is important. They have made it so much easier for me."

"Formula One is exactly as I thought it would be, so I have had no unpleasant surprises. Of course, it is a big step. I know that. After Formula Three you are in a big, busy paddock, lots of people, the

media, the attention and so on. "But that is how it should be in Formula One, just as it has to be tough. I accept that and I can honestly say that I am very comfortable in this environment."

He looked very comfortable on the track from the start. In Phoenix he turned the heads and slightly amazed himself by qualifying 13th for his Grand Prix debut. He was, he insisted, well within himself. Luckless partner Julian Bailey, meanwhile, failed to make the grid. Hakkinen's race was cut short by an oil fire.

In Brazil he qualified again - while Bailey again didn't - and this time Hakkinen stayed on the course, finishing a highly commendable ninth and setting a ninth fastest lap.

The experience was educational. He said: "It was hard, but then I had to find out for myself. It was important for me to drive a Grand Prix distance and I achieved that."

Those races also confirmed Collins' belief that, in Hakkinen, he had a rare gem. The man who put together the package to save Lotus regards the youngster as his prime asset.

Collins says: "Mika is performing just as I expected him to. I am not being wise after the event, I simply felt it was obvious how good he was. I really can't understand why more people didn't realise what he could do."

"He has pace and yes, he is self-assured, but he is not arrogant. He is here to do a job and he gets on with it. He has the right attitude and he has his head screwed on properly. He has the temperament to race at this level."

Collins predicts that Hakkinen will eventually find his level at the very pinnacle of the sport, that he has the potential to seriously challenge the pre-eminence of Ayrton Senna.

"Mika is the only driver coming through now," says Collins, "who will be capable of taking on Senna. It won't be this year as we don't, as yet, have the car to race with

McLaren. But I have absolutely no doubt that he will be good enough. He has all the qualities. All he needs now is the time to learn and develop." Comparison with Senna is almost unavoidable. Both stepped into Formula One after winning tough British Formula Three Championships driving for West Surrey Racing, both are conspicuously single-minded, perhaps even intense, in their pursuit of fulfilment.

Hakkinen makes no secret of his admiration for Senna - or his burning desire to take the Brazilian's place at the top.

"I have always tried to be myself and have never had any special idols in motor racing," says Hakkinen. "But obviously there are those drivers that you recognise as the best and Senna is the one who takes my eye."

"What I like about him is the

way he works. Yes, he is very quick and he is good to watch on the circuit. But I like him particularly because he tries all the time, he looks for improvement all the time. That is the way I like to work. I try my best all the time."

"Certainly there are other good drivers and you have to acknowledge Alain Prost's achievements in Formula One. His record is fantastic and speaks for itself."

"But I have to say that for me it has to be Senna. He has something special. No question, he is the No. 1 - for now!"

A mischievous grin breaks across his face as he stresses that last point, then adds: "One day I want to be No. 1."

Unlike Senna, Hakkinen appeared to be running off course before Dick Bennetts took him in. He had an abysmal year and many were ready to write off another kid

complaining about the wrong car, bad luck, the usual...

Bennetts, though, felt this was no ordinary kid. He saw in Hakkinen something of his mentor Keke Rosberg and said: "I am totally sure he has the ability and I'm certain he will do well."

Hakkinen had to do well to win that 1990 Formula Three title. He was hounded all the way by compatriot Mika Salo in an absorbing contest reminiscent of the Senna-Brundle scrap in 1983.

For Hakkinen the championship crown was only part of the pay-off. He explains: "It was good to win the title anyway, but especially so because of the circumstances."

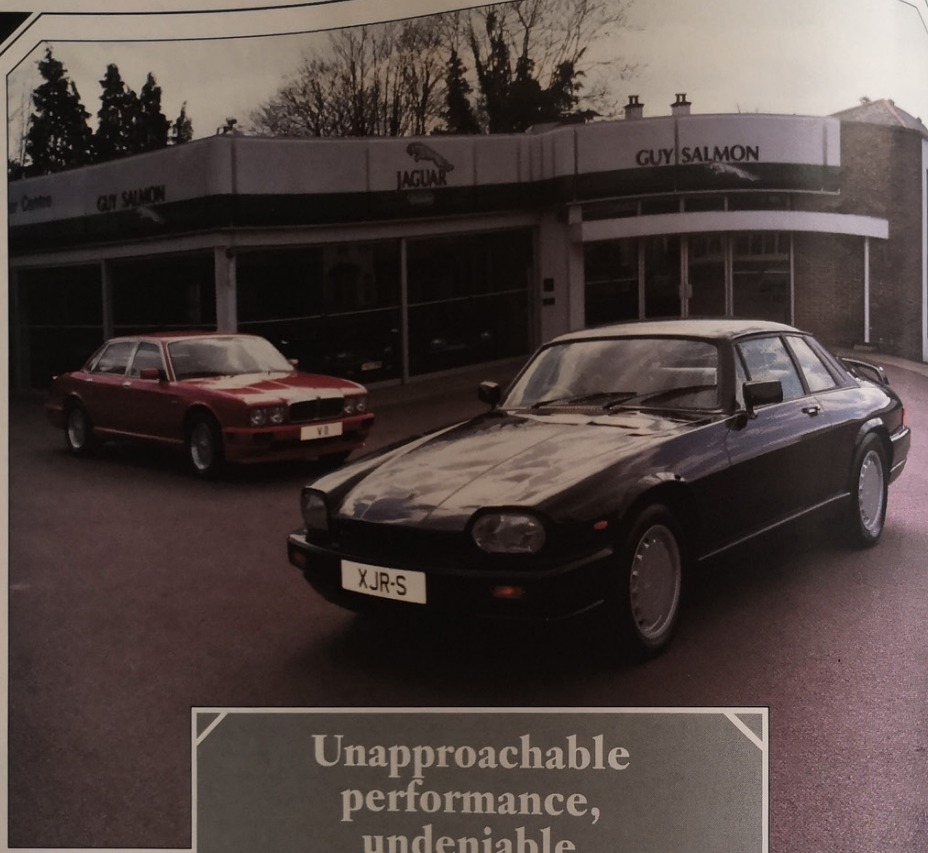
"It was very tough in terms of the racing. All season it was close and there was never any chance to take it easy or relax. That made it hard mentally as well as physically."



Phoenix was a hard place to start



A man with his head screwed on...



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DRIVER FEATURE: MIKA HAKKINEN

"And there was another factor. My main opponent was another Finn so of course it was built up as a rivalry and that meant we were racing under a lot of pressure. We both very much wanted to win.

"So in the end it was very satisfying to win the championship and have the experience of that sort of fight. I am sure that helped me prepare for Formula One."

Hakkinen knew that at the same time he had to be prepared for the first harsh reality of Formula One.

He says: "Last year I was used to winning and I expected to be winning. This year I know I can't and I don't expect to. That is the big difference that you have to accept when you come into Formula One racing. You cannot walk straight up to the best car."

But shouldn't he have waited for a car and a team with a more certain future? He had, after all, endured that miserable '89 and surely had time on his side.

Hakkinen - and Rosberg - didn't see it that way. Collins convinced both that Lotus were as healthy as many and healthier than some. They duly decided that there was nothing to be gained from sitting in the wings and stepped out onto the big stage.

"We knew what we faced, but I didn't think it was a risk going to Lotus," maintains Hakkinen. "I thought the team was right and that, as we went through the season, would be able to improve the car.

"It was difficult for all the team, of course, because everything was so late. The car was ready just before the start for the season, we had the Judd engine, so much to do and so little time. We went to Phoenix with very little testing.

"Phoenix is not an easy place to start your Formula One career and so, considering the other circumstances also, I was very pleased with the way things went.

"But for us the first two races

were bound to be difficult. There was a lot more we could do. For us the important period was the month up to Imola.

"We needed that time to test properly, put on the mileage and really work on the car. Everyone at Lotus knows that. We are all working hard to go forward.

"I am sure you will see us improve over the next few races. I have now finished a race and I want to do that consistently. The next stage is to score points and I think we can do that this season."

And beyond this season? "I am confident I can win races and reach the very top. That is what I am aiming for.

"I am still young and I have a lot of learning to do. But I am ready for that. I know what has to be done. I have belief in my ability and I have the desire to succeed.

"I take nothing for granted and understand that so many things can go wrong in Formula One. I am determined, though, to go all the way in the sport."



Aiming for the top

67

GRAND PRIX EDITIONS MAY 1991



DRIVER FEATURE: MICHELE ALBORETO

NOWHERE MAN...

DRIVER FEATURE



■ BY MARK FOGARTY



Michele testing again...

Favour is a fickle thing at Ferrari, where this year's rooster is next year's feather duster. Among those plucked in their prime was Michele Alboreto, his once brilliant career plunged into steep decline by Maranello's machiavellian machinations. Since his departure from Ferrari at the end of 1988, Alboreto has had the results of a has-been. Last year he failed to finish in the points and was still scoreless before Imola.

He seems such a pale shadow of the feisty Ferrari team-leader of the mid-1980s that many along the pitlane question whether he still has The Right Stuff. Alboreto counters that what he needs to restore his reputation is The Right Car.

"I just lost having a competitive car," he explains. "I think after Ferrari it's very hard for every driver, but for me it was even worse because I didn't have a chance to drive for another competitive team. After Ferrari I accept to risk with Tyrrell, and with no money, with nothing, we bring the car to the

podium in the the fourth race. So I don't think I lost my ability, I just lost a competitive drive.

"After these good results with Tyrrell, I was without a car in the middle of the season and then I drove for a little time with Lamborghini, but it was just the beginning of the team. Last year I was with Footwork with the Cosworth engine. There is no chance to have a good result with this material. So I am looking for another way and maybe this is with Porsche."

Alboreto likens his situation to that of Nelson Piquet, who was similarly accused of being past it when he was at Lotus. Just as Piquet's switch to Benetton last year proved his car had been his handicap, Alboreto is confident he can be competitive again if the Porsche-powered Footwork FA12 fulfills its promise.

"I think you cannot forget how is the way to drive a Formula One car," he says. "If you have a competitive car and you are a winner, you win again. Can you imagine Thierry Boutsen, for example. He was very good last year with the Williams, but everybody forgot him, too, now he has to drive for the 26th position.

"I'm sure if you put Senna today in the AGS, he cannot win races. If you have a competitive car and you were able to win in the past, you are able to win even tomorrow."

But for all the faith - not to mention hope - he places in

Footwork designer Alan Jenkins and Porsche engine guru Hans Mezger, Alboreto doesn't regard the remainder of this season as make or break for his crippled career.

"No. Every year is important. This one is a good opportunity for me to have again a competitive car. I will see what happens. Alex (Caffi, his teammate) and I will try to bring up again this team. When you have results, everybody starts to remember what you can do, but in the position where we are now, it is difficult for somebody to remember me!

"But I don't work for this. I had from F1 what I want - I win races, I drive five years for Ferrari, I was leading the world championship - so, personally, I'm sure about myself. If I can come back in this position, I'm very, very happy. If I cannot, it means that God says no! I have no regrets."

Just as Alboreto is committed to lending his experience and craft to Footwork-Porsche's ambitious tilt for the top, the team also acknowledges its obligation to the mild-mannered Milanese. Footwork team manager John Wickham freely acknowledges that Alboreto had little to work with - or for - last year.

"Certainly, last year he was handicapped by machinery," says Wickham. "We know the car, the 11B, was a very bad car in terms of downforce grip levels. It gave the drivers no confidence.

"Occasionally, Michele found the car wasn't so bad and then he put a lot into it. At Mexico, France and Silverstone, the car was mid-field and the quickest Cosworth runner. But when he felt the car was really not going to work from the outset, from the beginning of the weekend, he found it very difficult to motivate himself.

"His motivation towards the end of last year was very high when we thought we would be running the Porsche engine at the last two races. Once we started

testing, we realized the car was basically going to be no better than the 11B, and in testing, it proved slower, in fact. So it was a big demotivator over the winter."

Alboreto has no qualms admitting that, because the 11B and interim 11C were such bad cars, he often didn't give his maximum effort.

"Absolutely. Actually, the challenge last year was to try to qualify the car and that is not the target I want to have in F1. But now I'm sure we'll have a competitive car and a good base to develop the Porsche engine.

"It was really bad inside of me because I made all this effort in these years. I have not had a good car, but it brings back all my force and I start to look at it in another way."

"I believe in the people at Porsche, I believe in Hans Mezger. I think he's one of the best engine engineers in the world, and sooner or later it will arrive. But to let him work properly, we must give him a good car.

"The car of last year was too bad to give him an information how to develop the engine. With this car, I think we can start to give a good information to have a competitive engine soon."

Alboreto is entering his second decade in F1. He started with Tyrrell in 1981 and three years later became Ferrari's first Italian driver in a decade. His peak was 1985, when he won two races and was runner-up to Alain Prost in the world championship.

His fall from grace began with the arrival of Gerhard Berger in 1987 and his fate was sealed

before the middle of the following season, when Nigel Mansell was signed for 1989. Ironically, Berger and Mansell subsequently fell out of favour, too, although the consequences were less severe.

"Exactly the same happened to me what happened to Berger in '89 and Mansell last year," says Alboreto. "It's always the same. When the story with Ferrari is finished, you're lost. You cannot find the way if you don't go, as Berger and Mansell did, to McLaren or Williams.

Initially, being forced to drive second-rate cars bruised Alboreto's ego. But he now draws determination from his difficulties.

"It was really bad inside of me because I made all this effort in these years. I have not had a good car, but it brings back all my force and I start to look at it in another way."

Alboreto believes his easy-going nature and willingness to work closely with his teammates contributed to his downfall at Ferrari. "My big mistake is that I was too honest," he was overheard telling Jenkins at the launch of the Footwork FA12.

Despite the belated realization that others took advantage of his ethics, he has no intention of changing his ways.

"It's my character. I don't want to change myself for any other advantage. I want to be honest, I try to help the team to work in the right way. I'm not looking for my immediate advantage, I'm looking for the advantage for the whole team.

"I think that if the two drivers work together in the right way, all the team takes the advantage from that. For me, it's much more difficult not to be honest. I cannot do anything else.

"It's a hard, hard life in F1 because it's a very individual world. Everybody thinks about themselves. I will stay in F1, I hope, for a long time more, but not forever."



Don't believe this lifestyle is all fun!

They say time flies when you're enjoying yourself, and certainly the opening races of the season already seem a long time ago. Phoenix came upon us very quickly, and while I think the team worked well, we undoubtedly settled down a lot more by the time Interlagos came around. Suddenly, with the season underway, the full scale of being involved in Formula One has come home to us.

Pre-qualifying, often discussed by us before the season started, turned out to be just as difficult as anyone could have predicted. It can be very frustrating, as we found out in Phoenix, because the slightest problem can rob a driver of a chance to make it through to qualifying proper. If the team made an error in Phoenix, it was probably not using qualifying tyres early enough, leaving Andrea and Bertrand with a lot of work to do during the second half of the session. And, when one of them made it into the top four, it meant that the second of our drivers would get knocked out!

In the end Andrea missed a gear, damaged the engine, and was unable to get back to the pits in time. Without hesitation, he came striding back and admitted it was his fault. He was devastated, because he now realised the car's potential even more fully, and thoroughly disappointed not to have an opportunity to prove its worth in qualifying.

Bertrand, despite having completed only a couple of laps during his previous visits to Phoenix with Onyx and Coloni, did an excellent job, although he was under a lot of

pressure from both the team and those who were watching our every move. He said before the race that he felt the car was superb on race tyres, and his performance in the early laps confirmed that. From 14th on the grid, he'd climbed up to seventh - just out of the points - before he spun after encountering wreckage from the Patrese/Moreno accident.

That was followed by a pitstop - the team's first in Formula One - before we could send Bertrand back into the race. He was still in seventh place with only five laps left to go. I really thought that we were going to get to the finish of our first GP but, almost within sight of the flag, the engine failed and he was out. More importantly though, I think we showed people that our package was right from the start.

With the first race of the season over, the team concentrated on moving the cars, engines, spares and accessories down to Interlagos for the Brazilian race a fortnight later. I finished off my trip to Phoenix by having a game of golf with Herbie Blash from Brabham, and there's no doubt that a quick 18 holes is a good way to calm the nerves after a

Grand Prix weekend.

I think my golfing exploits have often been discussed, although these days I play less for obvious reasons. A few years back I had a very low handicap and was playing well, but I have dropped back a little. I played Andrea recently, and got beaten, so I will have to have a few more rounds before exacting my revenge.

Before going to Brazil, I went to Japan for another series of meetings. It was a hectic trip, stepping off the plane and into a 10 hour meeting, so don't let anyone tell you that a so-called jet-set lifestyle is all fun. However, I like Japan, and the Japanese are good people to deal with. Very direct, very demanding, but very honourable when they agree something. Shoei, who supply our team clothing, is turning out to be a fantastic supplier, sending at least two people to every race and really looking after us.

Meanwhile, after a flight from Tokyo to London, then London to Sao Paulo, it was down to Interlagos. Once again, I am happy to say, both cars were quickly on the pace and, after his problems in Phoenix, it was good that Andrea

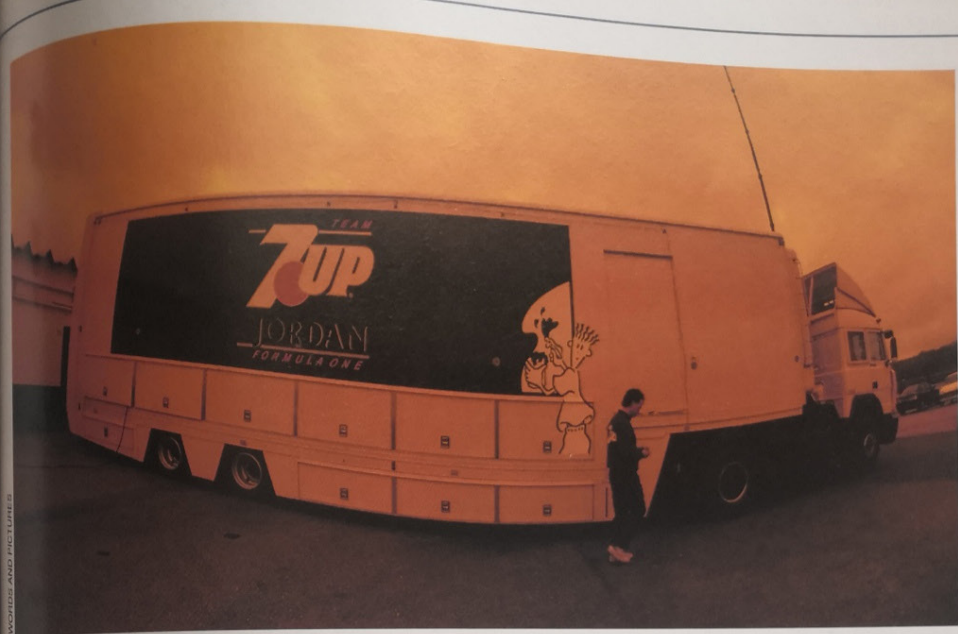
came through prequalifying so well. Both cars had been quick on qualifiers early on in the session - we learned from our Phoenix inexperience this time and both of them came through that difficult obstacle. Others hit trouble, which is obviously a help to us, but I felt that the team was working much more effectively. Everyone's learning quickly. With pre-qualifying out of the way, we could concentrate a little more on fine-tuning the cars during the two days of qualifying. In the first timed session, Andrea was up as high as seventh at one stage before both cars provisionally qualified 10th and 12th, with Bertrand ahead. He set his time in the spare car as well, because his race chassis was undergoing an engine and gearbox change after pre-qualifying. For Bertrand to set such a good time in the spare car was also reassuring to the team, because it confirmed to us that all three chassis were equally prepared. In the event of a panic - such as one of the race cars breaking down at an important point in a session or just before a race - we knew that we could rely on the spare being up to the job.

It was good to have both drivers so well placed after the first session, because the rain was never far away in Brazil and we didn't want to risk having problems in the first session, and then seeing the second session ruined by rain.

As it was, Saturday stayed dry as well and Bertrand kept his 10th place while Andrea had trouble with the fuel pressure and fell back to 13th. At least both cars were in the top half of the field - very pleasing for us considering it was still only our second GP. Even so, there was a feeling that we could do better, and certainly Andrea remains confident that both he and Bertrand can get onto the first five rows fairly regularly. The car is best suited to the quicker tracks, and you only have to see an action photograph of the rear of the car to see how close to the ground we run it.

The race again gave us a chance to show the cars' potential, although Andrea lasted only 10 laps until his engine cut out and spun him off the track. Bertrand meanwhile, continued the form he had shown in Phoenix with another strong run through to eighth place until fuel

WORDPRESS AND PICTURES





LEROY

pick-up problems caused him to retire late in the race.

On the face of it, perhaps you might think that I'd be disappointed to come away from the first two races without a finish. Of course, there is disappointment at that, but more than anything else, the whole team is greatly encouraged by our results. We proved our ability to run in the top 10, and that is vital for us at this stage.

The first two races were always going to be difficult, and we have come away with great confidence for the races ahead.

With the first two races over and done with, I decided to take a break. The planning and management of Jordan Grand Prix has taken months and months of effort, and has dominated my life. Consequently, it was important for me to have some time with my

wife Marie and our kids.

We have a place in Sotogrande in southern Spain which used to be a regular escape from the world of motor racing. Nowadays, trips down there are few and far between, which is a shame because it is a really nice place, down by the sea and close to the golf course. Tony Jacklin is one of our neighbours but, as I said before, I don't get too much time



The bustle and bustle of life in Formula One leaves little time for relaxation

to tee up these days.

Over the years my telephone number down in Spain has been spread far and wide in the racing world, so it sometimes seems that the villa has become yet another office. Getting away from racing is not easy. Still, I enjoyed the break, if only to soak up some sun and spend time with my family, and then it was back to Oxford, and into the office at Silverstone.

And, in case you think Formula One is my only topic these days, I went down to Vallelunga to watch the opening round of the Formula 3000 championship. Sadly this meant that I was unable to attend Martin Donnelly's wedding, but I hear that it was a great day and certainly wish Diane and he a happy future. It was good to see pictures of Martin standing without crutches. Now it's Imola, round three.



and an important time for us to build on our early season performances, followed by Monaco with the sun, sea and invariably Senna. Hopefully we will have some points in the bag by the next time I write my diary, so keep your fingers crossed.

= Spoils =



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TEAM FOCUS: AGS

The Flying Goat and the Swedish Veteran

TEAM FOCUS



Gonfaron, a small, sleepy village in the south of France. A picturesque place in the hills not far from Paul Ricard, and a town with only two claims to fame: A flying goat - and a Formula One team. The goat is a legend in France: a local man once saw a goat fall of a hill, and later - perhaps under the influence of the local wine - swore that the goat flew. Today, the local wine carries the "flying goat" on the labels...

■ BY PETER NYGAARD

GRAND PRIX EDITIONS MAY 1991

The local Formula One team is not quite as legendary as the local goat. AGS - Automobiles Gonfarronaises Sportives - is one of the back-row teams in Grand Prix racing; a team which has had its fair share of problems in the past and which began in 1991 with financial problems again bedevilling its future.

The team was founded by the enthusiastic, indefatigable Henri Julien. As a driver in the late sixties, Julien built most of his cars himself, and when he retired from driving, he concentrated on building racing cars, now carrying the AGS name. The "villages racers" progressed through Formula France, Formula Renault and Formula Three with drivers like Henri Pescarolo, Johnny Servoz-Gavin and Pascal Fabre.

Christian Vanderpleyn was the designer in the small AGS team. He had joined Julien in 1960 as an apprentice when he was 17 years old, and even though he studied engineering at the University of Toulon and worked for Matra, Vanderpleyn never took an engineering exam. Still, with a lot of experience from the lower formulae under his belt, Vanderpleyn designed a Formula Three car for AGS in 1978. Although the team only had about six fulltime members (and was joined by a local gendarme who acted as a gofer at the races) AGS quickly established themselves as a top team in F2. Richard Dalles scored two wins in the European Championship for AGS in 1980, and later Philippe Streiff - an AGS driver in F2 for three seasons - won the last Formula 2 race in the end of 1984.

Streiff and AGS moved into the new Formula 3000 for 1985, finishing 8th. in the championship, but by now the small Gonfarron team had decided to go Grand Prix racing.

With less than 10 people on the pay-roll, it took AGS about eight months to build Gonfarron's first Formula One car. In order to save money and resources, the JH 21C

was constructed around a Renault monocoque from 1983, and the car was built at the team's headquarters: Julien's own house with a couple of pre-fabricated "barns" in the front garden. With sponsorship from Jolly Club, the JH 21C, powered by Carlo Chiti's Motori Moderni V6 Turbo, debuted at the Italian Grand Prix 1986 in the hands of Ivan Capelli. The Italian qualified the heavy, bulky car 25th fastest but retired early, and the team's only other race that year, at Estoril, brought exactly similar results.

For 1986, the team updated the Renault based car, installed Ford's Cosworth engine and switched from Pirelli to Goodyear. Pascal Fabre, an AGS driver in Formula Two and Formula Three, joined the team as its sole driver, but neither Fabre nor the car was competitive.

But what the AGS lacked in speed, it had in reliability: Fabre finished eight of the first nine races, and later in the season, when Fabre was replaced by Roberto Moreno, AGS scored its first Formula One point by surviving the very hot Australian Grand Prix in sixth place.

The Colin Chapman Cup for normally aspirated cars brought AGS a third place - again mainly due to the car's excellent reliability: with only six cars entered for the Cup, and the usual point scale with points for the first six cars, reliability was always going to be rewarded in this "second division" of Grand Prix racing in 1987.

For 1988, the five years old Renault monocoque was finally abandoned, and Vanderpleyn designed the first genuine AGS F1 car. Streiff returned to the team, and with the neat, uncomplicated JH 23 AGS enjoyed a fine first half of the season - the future looked rosy for the team from the town of the flying goat: Streiff regularly qualified in the top-12, a deal for a new W12-engine was signed, and the team decided to build its own factory complete with test track in Le Luc, just outside Gonfarron.

The M.G.N. W12 engine, designed and built by Guy Negre's small six-man team, was first bench-tested in late 1987. Initial results were very promising, and the first AGS-M.G.N. W12 was expected to debut at the French Grand Prix 1988.

Unfortunately, both M.G.N. and AGS ran into financial problems: Neither the W12 nor the JH 23 were developed properly during 1988, and while the engine's debut was first postponed until the end-of-season races and later cancelled altogether, Streiff slipped backwards on the Grand Prix grids, and finished the season without points.

The development crisis was made even worse at midsummer,

when Coloni poached three senior members of the AGS team: Technical Director Christian Vanderpleyn left the team after 18 years and was joined at Coloni by Research and Developments Manager Michel Costa and Team Manager Frederic Dhainault.

At about the same time, the team's sponsor, construction company Bouyges, decided to stop its involvement in Grand Prix racing - another body blow to the small team, which at that time only consisted of about 15 people. During the winter of 1988-89 the team was restructured. Streiff remained in the team, and after negotiations with several drivers including Jean-Louis Schlesser and Christian Danner,

Germany's Joachim Winkelhock signed for AGS with backing from Camel. Ex-Ligier designer Claude Galopin also joined the team, and just before the start of the season, French entrepreneur Cyril de Rouvre bought the majority shareholding in the team. Founder Henri Julien remained in the team as a consultant, and the team's base remained in his front garden in Gonfarron, the new factory in Le Luc still under construction.

AGS team morale hit rock bottom even before the 1989 season started: in pre-season testing in Rio, Streiff clipped a kerb in one of the fastest corners of the Jacarepagua track, launching the AGS into the air and crashing

down on top of the barrier upside down. Streiff was seriously injured, and is, of course, still confined to a wheelchair.

Gabriele Tarquini was signed as new team leader, and the Italian was sensational in his first races for the team. He was classified sixth at both Imola and in Mexico City, his point from Imola later withdrawn when Boutsen and Caffi were reinstated in the result after having been disqualified after the race. In the first half of the season, Tarquini did not have to prequalify, but the second AGS - a new entry - in the hands of Winkelhock never made it through the early Friday morning sessions.

The new Galopin-designed JH



GRAND PRIX PHOTO

On the streets of Phoenix, 1991

24 was introduced for the French Grand Prix, but despite Tarquini's point from Mexico, both AGS cars were relegated into prequalifying at mid-season. At the same time, Yannick Dalmas replaced the unimpressive Winkelhock, but neither Tarquini nor Dalmas managed to haul the difficult JH 24 through prequalifying in the latter part of 1989. In September 1989, the M.G.N. W12 was finally tested in a converted JH 22 chassis after long delays due to financial constraints, but even though AGS had a three years contract with MGN, the innovative W12 was never seen at a race meeting.

Tarquini and Dalmas remained with AGS for 1990, and designer Michel Costa returned to the team after a season with Coloni. Hugues de Chaunac, boss of the successful ORECA F3 and F3000 organisation and an FI boss in the late seventies with his Martini team, joined AGS as Technical and Sporting Director. The team was further strengthened when Philippe Streiff and Henri

Julien were named advisers.

Before the 1990 season started, AGS finally left Julien's front garden, and moved to the new factory beside the rebuilt 2.2 kms Le Luc track just outside Gonfarron. The new premises also allowed the team to increase its workforce, and around 50 people worked for AGS at the start of the 1990 season, which was sponsored by French fashion maker Ted Lapidus.

Tarquini and Dalmas started the year in updated versions of the JH 24 designs, but AGS only qualified for one of the first races.

In May, the attractive JH 25, designed by Costa, was introduced, but the new car proved difficult to develop. De Chaunac left the team after only six months, and a few weeks later Costa offered his resignation when his new design proved uncompetitive. Swiss engineer Peter Wyss joined the team from Leyton Louse, and things improved a little as the season progressed, one of the AGS drivers usually qualifying for most of the races in the latter

part of the year. Dalmas scored a ninth place at Jerez, saving the team from prequalifying in the first half of this season.

Dalmas left Formula 1 to go sportscar racing with Peugeot, but Tarquini decided to stay on for a third year. Several drivers were in line for the second seat, Andrea de Cesaris even signing a pre-contract and visiting the new factory - and damaging a JH 25 at the Le Luc test track...

Rumours suggested a merger with the troubled Larrousse organisation, both teams short of a full 1991 budget, but shortly before FISA's dead-line for driver nominations, AGS announced that Swedish veteran Stefan Johansson would join Tarquini in the team's 1991 line-up. Stefan, once a Ferrari - and McLaren driver, hopes once again to establish himself as the leading Formula 1 driver from the Nordic countries: With two Flying Finns already in Grand Prix racing, can the team from the town of the flying goat make Stefan the "Flying Swede"?

FACT FILE - AGS

1986

Debut of overweight Renault-based JH21C at Monza, associated with Italian Jolly Club organisation, driven by Ivan Capelli who retired from Italian Grand Prix and the Portuguese at Estoril.

1987

Car is the JH22, driven by Pascal Fabre and Roberto Moreno. Engine Ford Cosworth DF2 V8. Car is slow but reliable on Goodyear tyres after switch from Pirelli. Fabre replaced by Moreno for end-of-year races and he survives for sixth place in Australia.

1988

Philippe Streiff is the driver of the JH23. Plans announced for MGN W12 and plans for a factory and test track at Le Luc. But design team, including Michel Costa, leave for Coloni and MGN W12 never races due to lack of funds.

1989

Streiff is seriously injured in pre-season testing in Rio de Janeiro and Gabriele Tarquini is signed as new team leader. French entrepreneur Cyril de Rouvre buys the team, founder Henri Julien stays as a consultant. Driver changes see Yannick Dalmas replace Joachim Winkelhock during the season. Costa also returns.

1990

With Tarquini and Dalmas as drivers of the JH24 and the long-awaited move to the factory at Le Luc completed, there is an air of optimism but only a small improvement in form late in the season. Both drivers fail to qualify for the majority of the races and by the end of the year financial difficulties are taking over.

1991

Stefan Johansson is signed to join Tarquini in the team, but financial problems bedevil everything and the JH26 programme is halted. The team faces closure after the opening two races, but, after calling in the receiver, hopes to find a way of surviving and racing again and saving the jobs of its 56 staff.

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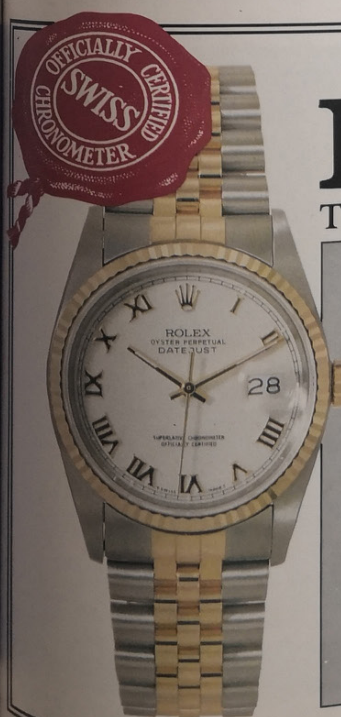
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TEAM FOCUS: FOOTWORK-PORSCHE

After 13 years of missing the mark, co-founder Jackie Oliver believes the former Arrows team is finally on target to become a force in Formula One. Refunded, renamed and rejuvenated is the catch-cry at Footwork, which is banking its millions on the combined technical talents of British boffin Alan Jenkins and German juggernaut Porsche.

If the breast-beating optimism voiced by team principals and partners at the unveiling of the new Jenkins-designed, Porsche-powered Footwork FA12 is to be believed, then the opposition has reason to quiver at the prospect of a wealthier and wiser reincarnation of Arrows.

"It's a new team," declared Oliver. "There will be a change. What you saw during the last 14 years won't be the same for the next 14."

Of course, it has all been heard before. In recent years, especially, Oliver has been delivering an annual promise that Arrows was on the verge of great things. The stark statistics, however, are that Arrows, Footwork/Arrows and now just plain Footwork has never delivered on those promises.

Never even come close, in fact. In 13 seasons, Arrows cum Footwork had contested 199 races (up to Imola) for a grand total of no wins and one pole position. Its



Launch of the FA12

best finishes in the Constructors' World Championship are fourth in 1988 and sixth in '87. Otherwise, the team has been firmly attached to the bottom half of the F1 league ladder, culminating last year in one of its worst performances - a single point-scoring finish.

Is it any wonder, then, that there is considerable scope for scepticism, Jenkins and Porsche not withstanding? Fancy or not, Footwork could easily be dismissed as crying wolf once too often.

Team manager John Wickham, who has taken over racing operations from co-founder Alan Rees, recognizes that Footwork-Porsche has a credibility problem. But he also states a persuasive case in defence of Oliver's New Deal spiel.

"There are a number of elements which have changed over the past 18 months," explains Wickham, whose varied race management background includes introducing Honda to F1 in 1983 with his guinea-pig Spirit team. "The initial change was the ownership and increase in finance. Basically, the financial situation has changed dramatically. We're now spending twice as much as the team did in 1989 and obviously that's assisting us considerably in research and development and general performance parameters."

"The second change is the coming of Alan Jenkins, who's quite a strong-willed designer. He likes to run the total design package himself, doesn't accept very much influence from outside and, therefore, I think the car will benefit from that. The last two years has seen a rather open-minded approach to the whole design office, with some influence from the team owners as well, which I think tended to compromise it."

"The third part of the package which has changed, obviously, is the engine. The commitment of Porsche is great; they really are committed to being, by the end of this year, among the top 10 qualifiers and top six race finishers."

But achieving that aim certainly



won't be as easy as 1-2-3. On top of last year's shabby showing, the interim Porsche-powered FA11C was no improvement on the no-grip Cosworth car. Neither Michele Alboreto nor Alex Caffi qualified at Phoenix, while at Interlagos, Alboreto just made the cut, battling with the backmarkers until the gearbox gave up at half-distance.

"You certainly can't make a winning team overnight," says Wickham. "We're compared, even by our owners, with Jordan quite often because he's come in as a new team. But they've had a year of research and development and they've managed to secure an engine package which at this moment is very strong. And I believe they have at least one quite capable driver, so they've started off very well."

"We still have basically the same staff on the shop floor as Arrows had four or five years ago and it does take a little time to wind people up, perhaps, to a new situation. For sure, I think the recent changes in the race team management and in the factory operation will assist."

"Alan Jenkins is taking considerably more interest in the race team situation - not just the running of the cars, but the whole situation."

And I hope to work with him quite closely on ensuring that that whole side moves forward rather than stagnates."

For Jenkins' part, the former McLaren technical staffer and Onyx designer claims he has been conservative with the FA12, despite its unorthodox snout, which resembles the winged keel of an America's Cup yacht.

"We have been conservative in most areas because the car has to work from the word 'go'," explains Jenkins. "We've worked closely with Porsche on the packaging of their engine and its cooling, but the first major step was deciding that we were going with the high nose and that's where the wind tunnel work was concentrated."

"We really didn't spend as long in the wind tunnel as we would have liked due to availability, but we concentrated on looking at the whole raised-floor idea and where that led. You have to look at the front suspension geometry slightly differently as the place where you used to mount the lower front wishbones isn't there any more!"

"Once you've made the commitment to raise the floor, you can work on various noses and wing details. We have one solution, but there are others. But if you have



LAT

the airflow right at the front, that's always a good start. Once you've done that, you find that your attitude changes to all sorts of details further back which maybe would have been less significant on other cars."

One area in which Jenkins has been unconventional is chassis construction. Proving that great minds think alike, he has paralleled Benetton's John Barnard disposal of separate load-bearing bulkheads.

"We have moulded-in a lot of suspension pick-up details and there are a number of preformed pieces in the structure which form the rocker pivot and take some of the loads out of the front suspension, so we have been able to do away with the front bulkheads," says Jenkins. According to Jackie Oliver, Jenkins and his team of design engineers at Footwork's technical centre are the vital link in the team's transition from stayer to player.

"The launch of the FA12 gives us a modern, state-of-the-art stock in Footwork, so we have a good foundation on which Porsche can improve the power of their engine and reduce its weight reliably," says Oliver. "For the first time, we have long-term policies, and they have had a significant effect on the building of this new chassis."

"At the end of the year, we hope that the car can run consistently in the top 10 and finish races, giving us the winter months of 1991/92 in which to produce a B version of Alan's car and for Porsche to have that desperately-needed breathing space in which to produce an engine which rivals Honda, Ferrari and Renault."

But it is at Weissach in Germany rather than Milton Keynes in the English Midlands where Footwork's fate is more likely to be decided.

Porsche is both denying and addressing criticisms that its V12 engine is overweight and under-

powered. On one hand, the company's chief of engine design, Hans Mezger, says "It's not too heavy". But on the other, Mezger admits to an intensive development programme aimed at producing a motor more in keeping with Porsche's pedigree.

"Now we are trying very hard to reach the weight limit," he says. "Our main development work is to increase power and reduce weight continuously and to improve reliability. Our next generation should be at Hockenheim."

"We will improve the engine and Footwork will improve the chassis. I expect to show that the engine, the car and the drivers are a very good team. We will show we can get better."

Mezger, 61, has been designing race engines for Porsche since 1956. He masterminded the turbocharged TAG V6 which powered McLaren to a hat trick of world titles from 1984-86.

The success of that project,

which was commissioned and funded by the TAG-McLaren Group, has added a burden of expectation to Porsche's return to F1.

Footwork is also paying for the privilege of its partnership with Porsche - to the tune of US\$40 million over four years. But both Footwork and Porsche stress that the deal is more involved than a straight customer/supplier relationship.

"We're not paying for the whole programme," says John Wickham. "It's a 50/50 arrangement whereby we have a fixed cost for the four-year package, which includes last year. So we're pretty confident they're highly motivated."

"They can't allow the project to fall by the wayside because of their image. An awful lot of their work is outside contracts for other motor manufacturers and that will suffer if they find that the racing programme is not successful."

Porsche's executive vice-president of research and development, Dr Ulrich Bez, acknowledges that

the company's past successes put it under a lot more pressure than the likes of Yamaha or even Renault. "Yes, I think the pressure is very high, but also the competition is very high," says Bez, the driving force behind Porsche's F1 comeback.

"This does not surprise us. We have a lot of pressure from the public, they are waiting for us. We know very well how tough it is today, and we will improve ourselves and the team and the car step-by-step so that we are on a stable platform so that if we are close to the top teams, we can stay close to them."

"We are not interested in a very fast success and then to fall down. As you can see with a lot of other teams, they have a quick success and then they fall down. That's not what we want to do. We want to have the power to stay there."

"Our scale for the moment is not the success which means winning. Our scale is the we improve the engine, the car and the team to a level we're happy with and to the level of the competitors. As

long as we improve this level, compared with our competitors and ourselves, we are happy until we are close to the top teams."

"We are not looking for victories this year. If we wish like a small boy, we would wish it tomorrow. But if we are realistic, and we are realistic, we are looking for progress this year and success next year. We are happy if we make essential progress this year because we are coming from the basic level."

Despite concerns that the Porsche is too portly, Bez rejects the possibility of a radical redesign. "No, we don't plan this. Mr Mezger is responsible for the design of the engine and he has so much experience and know-how and reputation, that if he tells me 'I'm convinced about the concept of this engine', I believe him. So it is not necessary at the moment to think of alternatives."

But while the basic configuration - 80 degree V12 with central drive power take-off - will be retained, Bez concedes that the scope of the development pro-



An untortured snout?

gramme is far-reaching. "It means major steps in all the performance levels, which necessarily means different parts. If you do not change parts, you do not change results. So even if you do not see basic changes, it will be very different."

With Footwork getting its design house in order and Porsche pulling out all stops, the only key element unchanged is the driver line-up. Some see Michele Alboreto and Alex Caffi as the weakest links in the chain. However, for the time being at least, the team is prepared to take the blame for their poor performances.

"Certainly, last year they were handicapped by machinery," admits Wickham. "We know the 11B was a very bad car in terms of downforce grip levels. It gave the drivers no confidence.

"Occasionally, Michele found that the car was not so bad and then he put a lot into it. But when he felt the car was really not going to work from the outset, he found it very difficult to motivate himself. The same, I think, applies to Alex. But Alex drives in a different way, and a car with no feel is something he hates. So it's going to be very interesting once this car is up and running over the next two or three races to see how their abilities come through."

Despite his own career crisis, Alboreto has no hesitation vouching for Caffi's credentials. "He's very good. I think he's a very talented guy. He's one of the best as far as potential goes.

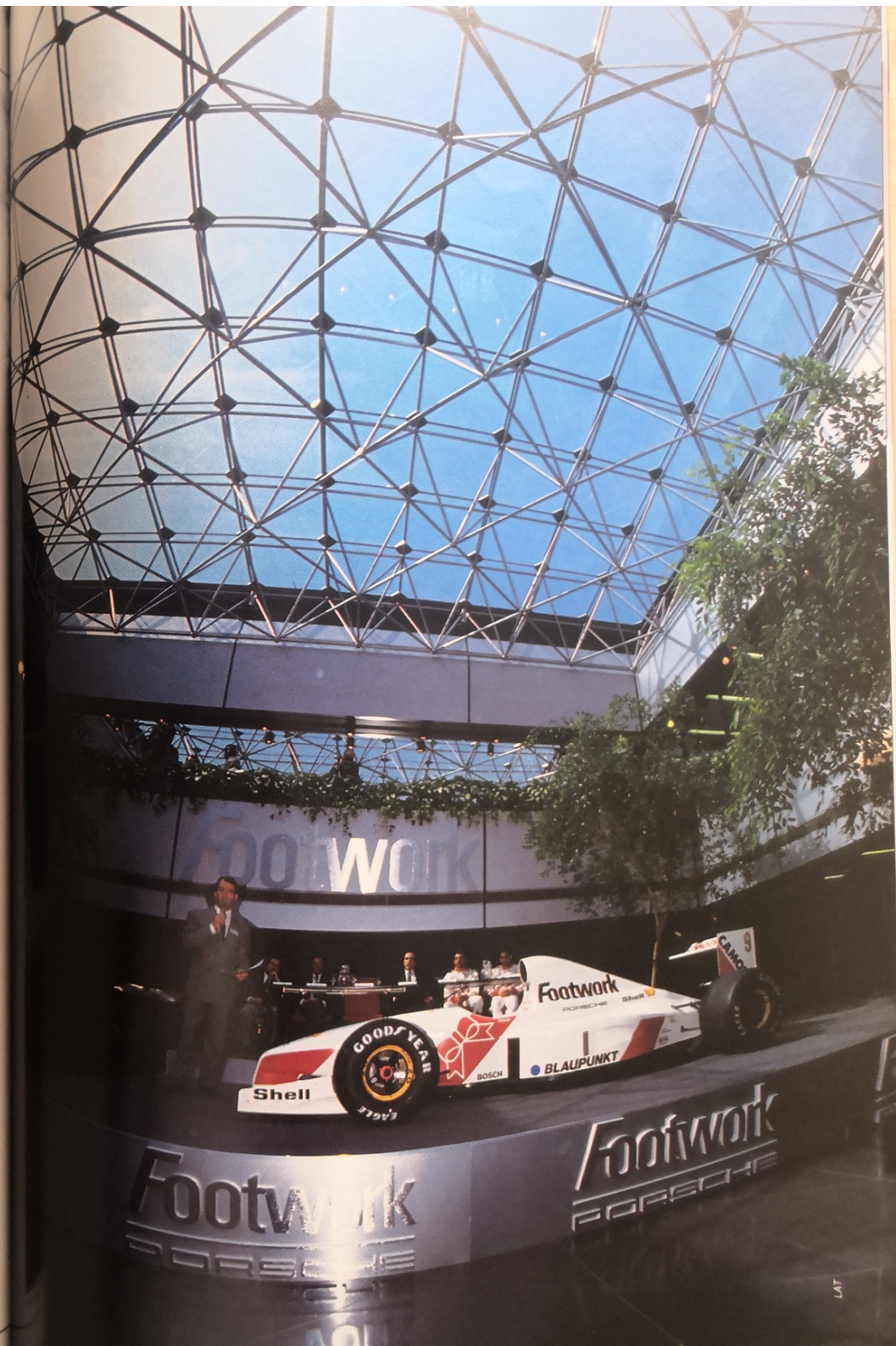
"But, as with me, he has not the car at the moment. Everybody forgot that with the little Scuderia Italia two years ago he started from the second row in Hungary in front of the Ferraris. So if he was able to do this, he can repeat this immediately."

Like the Footwork team itself, for Alboreto and Caffi, the next few months will be a case of confirmation or condemnation.

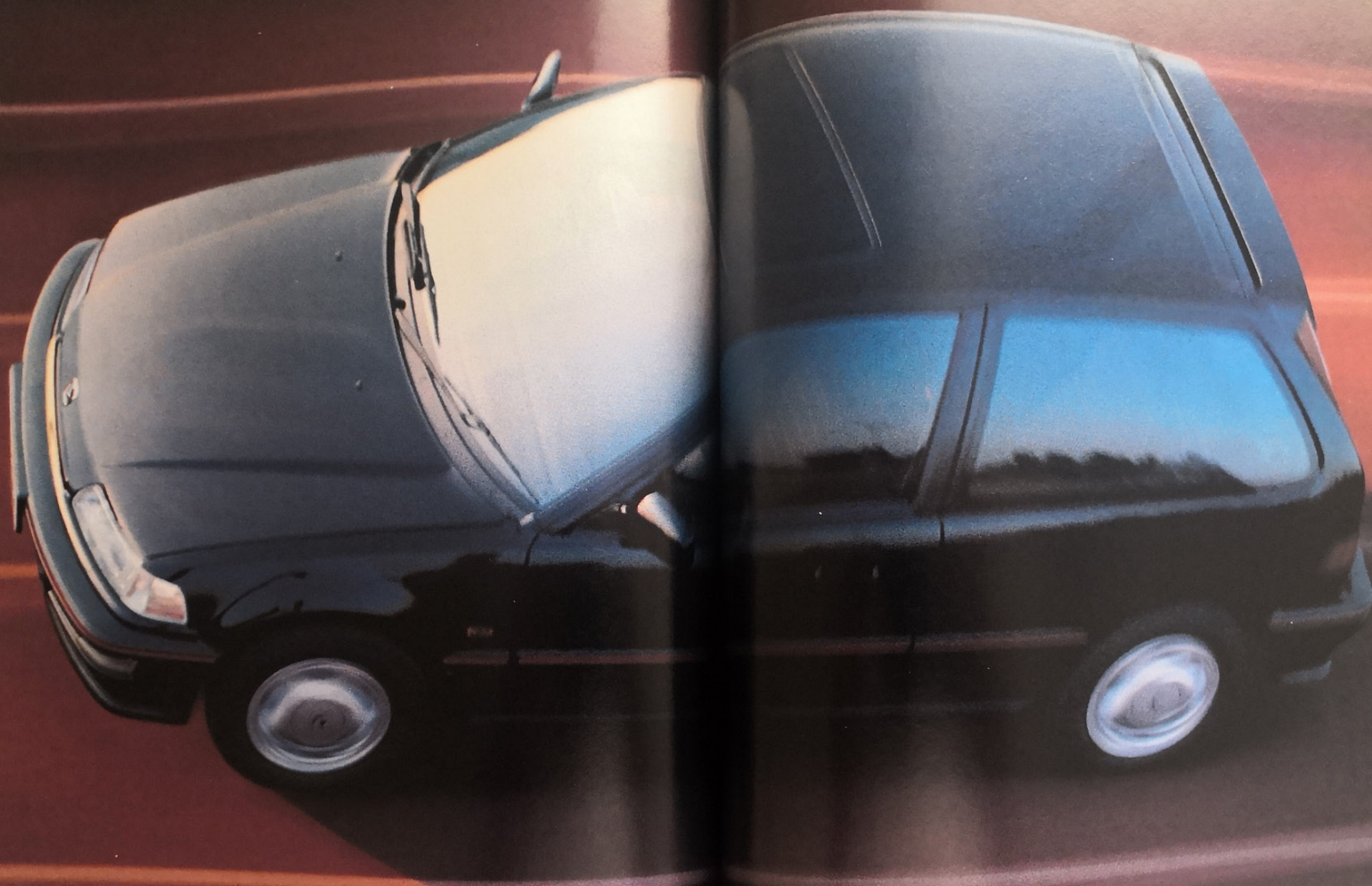
LAT



Michele: driving into the unknown?



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THE GREAT GRAND PRIX CARS: 1959/60 COOPER



Silverstone, 1960: Brabham in the Cooper leads Hill's BRM

Front-engined Cooper-Bristols had appeared regularly in Grands Prix in 1952 and 1953, and had picked up a few minor placings, but were no match for the Ferraris which dominated the sport at that time. Even in 500 cc Formula Three racing, the rear-engined Coopers faced a strong challenge from several British models.

In 1956 the bob-tailed 1100cc central-seater Cooper-Coventry Climax began to show promise in British sports car racing, and a single-seater version was successful in Formula Two. In 1957 a Two-litre F2 car appeared in several Grands Prix, but its only points result was fifth place, five laps behind, at Aintree.

It thus came as something of a surprise when Moss won the 1958 Argentine Grand Prix in Rob Walker's 2-litre Cooper - and even more of a surprise when Maurice Trintignant did the same at Monaco. By this time the factory team (Jack Brabham and Roy Salvadori) was using improved cars with 2.2-litre FPF engines; although the latter still suffered a power deficit on the faster circuits, Salvadori managed to finish second at Nurburgring, third at Silverstone and fourth at Zandvoort and Monza. The Cooper Car

Company was thus third in the 1958 Constructors' Championship, and John Cooper was able to persuade Coventry Climax to build a 2.5-litre version of the FPF engine for 1959.

The Cooper drivers for 1959 were Jack Brabham, Masten Gregory and Bruce McLaren. Jack had been with Cooper for some time and was very much number one, particularly as Roy Salvadori had made the mistake of switching to Aston Martin. Masten had established something of a reputation driving Maseratis - not to mention jumping from out-of-control sports cars before they crashed - and proved to be very competitive. Bruce, just 21, was a complete newcomer, but made rapid progress as the season went on.

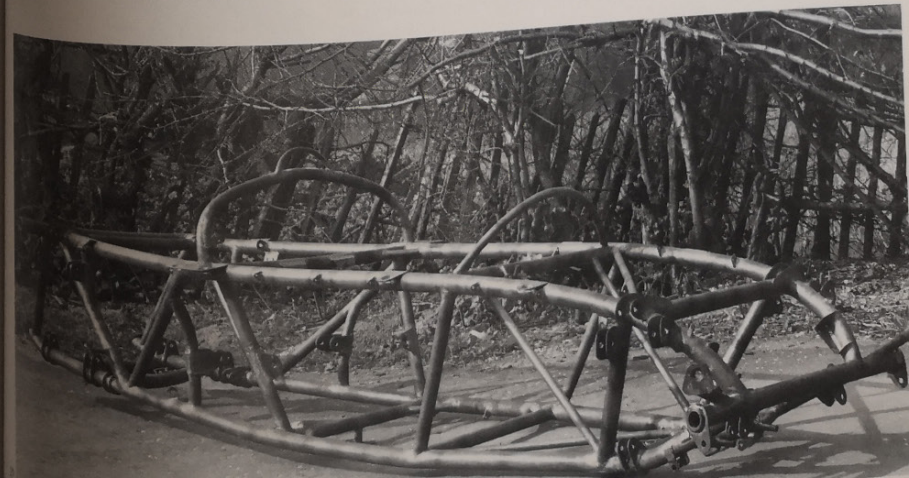
At Monaco, Moss was on pole position in a Rob Walker Cooper, and built up a lead of over a minute before his transmission failed. Brabham took over to win comfortably from Brooks's Ferrari, with Trintignant third in another Walker Cooper and McLaren fifth. At Zandvoort Moss again had transmission trouble while in the lead, handing victory to Bonnier's BRM; Brabham was second and Gregory third. At Reims the Ferrari's extra power enabled them to finish 1,2,3; with Brabham third

and McLaren fifth - McLaren's face badly cut by flying stones; cuts and heat exhaustion had forced Gregory to retire after only nine laps.

Aintree brought what was probably the works team's finest hour to date, with Brabham leading from start to finish and McLaren finishing third. In the two-part Avus race the Ferraris finished 1,2,3; both Brabham and McLaren retired with transmission failure, and Gregory with engine trouble.

On the twisty Lisbon circuit Coopers were first, second, third and fourth in qualifying (Moss, Brabham, Gregory, Trintignant) and first (Moss), second (Gregory) and fourth (Trintignant) in the race. Brabham had a rare accident, hitting some straw bales and being thrown out of the car; McLaren retired with clutch trouble. Moss was on pole again at Monza, with Brabham third, and that's how they finished; McLaren was well up until his engine failed, and Gregory was a non-starter following a sports car accident.

To clinch the World Championship Brabham had to finish ahead of Moss at Sebring, and also to make sure that Tony Brooks didn't win and set fastest lap. For a long while it looked as if he was going to take the title in

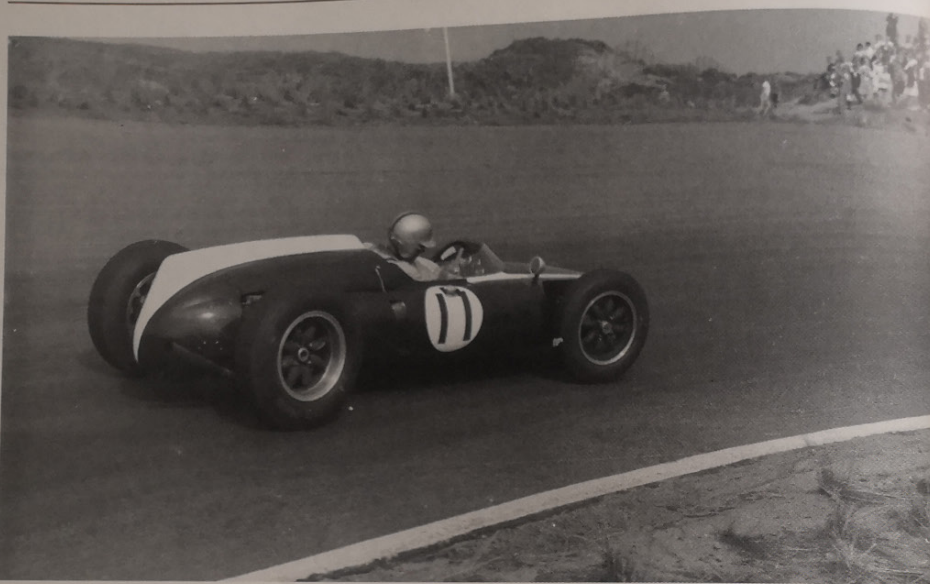


The 1960 F1 Cooper chassis

The super Surbiton flyer

In the mid-1950s, if you had predicted that Cooper would be Formula 1 Constructors' Champions in 1959 and 1960, you would have attracted some funny looks. Formula 1 cars were made by people like Mercedes, Ferrari and Maserati; they had their engines in the proper place, at the front, and were driven by Latins and Latin Americans.

■ BY DAVID PHIPPS



Brabham in the Dutch Grand Prix 1960

style with another win; Moss had retired early on with transmission trouble, McLaren was in second place, and Brooks was a long way behind. But on the last lap Brabham stopped, out of fuel; McLaren swept past to his first Grand Prix win, closely followed by Trintignant, and Brooks too went through before an exhausted Brabham pushed his car across the line in fourth place. As it turned out he needn't have bothered, though John Cooper was quite happy to have the fourth-place prize money!

For 1960, faced with a challenge from the first rear-engined Lotus, Cooper decided to produce a lower, wider car, with coil spring rear suspension in place of the transverse leaf which they had used since 1946. But for the first race of the season, at Buenos Aires in February, they used their 1959 cars, and after a spate of pit stops and retirements, McLaren came through to record his second successive victory. Brabham retired with gearbox failure, and Moss had rear suspension trouble, but took over Trintignant's car to finish third.

At Monaco, Moss had a Walker Lotus and won convincingly, with McLaren a distant second. Brabham spun off and apparently retired before half-distance, but later returned to the car and continued, in the hope of salvaging some points - only to be disqualified for receiving a push. At Zandvoort, Brabham almost matched Moss's Lotus in qualifying, and at the start he managed to snatch the lead. For seventeen laps the Cooper and the Lotus were nose to tail, and then Brabham threw up a kerbstone which burst one of Moss's tyres. Brabham went on to win comfortably, but McLaren retired with a broken drive shaft joint.

The 1960 Belgian Grand Prix is remembered mainly for the accidents which seriously injured Moss and Michael Taylor during qualifying, and killed Chris Bristow and Alan Stacey in the race. Brabham led all the way, McLaren finished second, and there was no-one else on the same lap.

At Reims, Brabham made it three in a row, winning comfortably from pole position after an early skirmish with the Ferraris;

this time McLaren was just beaten for second place by Olivier Gendebien in a Yeomen Credit Cooper. At Silverstone, Brabham won again, but only after a long battle with Graham Hill's BRM, and at Oporto he made it five in a row despite an early half-spin which cost him several places. McLaren finished second again after coming only fourth at Silverstone; Brabham was World Champion, and Cooper were Constructors' Champions with two races still to be run.

Like the other British teams, Cooper boycotted the Monza race, run on the combined road circuit and banked oval, and the season -

and the 2.5-litre Formula - ended at Riverside, California in November.

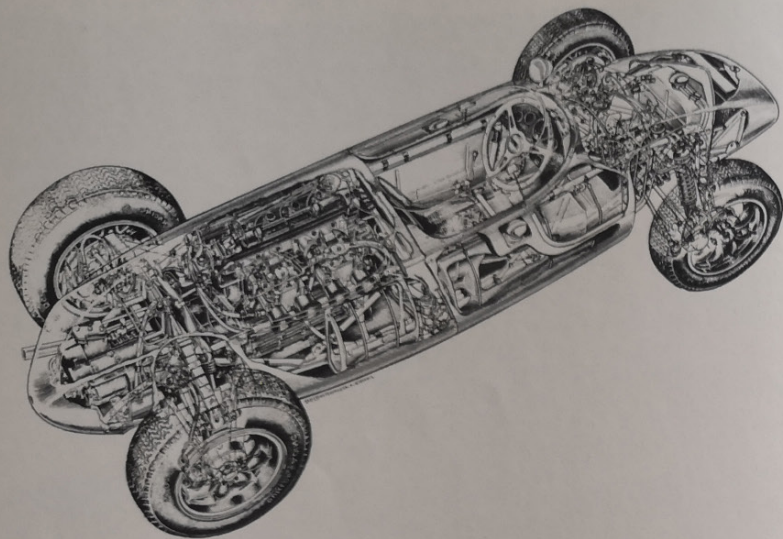
Sadly, the company did not keep pace with the technological developments of the 1960s and the factory is now a police car depot

Brabham led initially, but lost all chance of victory when he stopped at the pits after fuel from an over-filled tank caught fire in

the undertray; despite a string of fastest laps he was unable to make up the deficit and finished fourth, just behind McLaren. Despite the threat from Lotus, and the extra power of Ferrari and BRM, it had been a very successful season for the little team from Surbiton. Sadly, the company did not keep pace with the technological developments of the 1960s, and the factory is now a Police patrol car depot - an ironic change of use. Fortunately the Police were less active in the days when John Cooper used to carry out early morning tests of his racing cars on the Kingston by-pass.



Brabham at Becketts in 1960



There are many apocryphal stories about the way Coopers were designed and built. The most famous has the young Bruce McLaren arriving from New Zealand, enquiring into the whereabouts of his first F2 car, and being shown a pile of tubes. It is also said that some chassis drawings (chalk marks on the floor) are still visible at 243 Ewell Road! The fact remains that the 1959 and 1960 Coopers were the most effective F1

cars of their era.

As the accompanying photo shows, the chassis layout paid more attention to practicality than to textbook principles. Tubes curved to follow the line of the bodywork, and the brackets which provided mountings for the engine and suspension (double wishbones and coil springs all round) were welded on where appropriate. The end-product was rugged and reliable; in modern terms the 1959 and

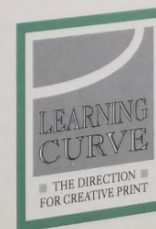
1960 Coopers would be described as "user-friendly". They weighed more than some of their rivals, and had less ultimate cornering power, but for two years they won both the Drivers' and Constructors' Championships by comfortable margins. And that, if you were John Cooper or Jack Brabham, was far more important than pioneering new ideas for the world's motor industry.



Brabham again - Oporto, 1960



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■ BY EOIN YOUNG

The jewel in F1's crown

There is nowhere like it. The Monaco Grand Prix began with disbelief in 1929 and has survived in disbelief ever since. It is the only circuit in the world that can sell itself to Bernie Ecclestone on the strength of what it is and what it was...

The support race for the superb Walkinshaw Jaguars this year brings big sportscars back to the Monaco streets for the first time since 1952 when the race switched to Le Mans-type sportscars in an endeavour to find something cheaper to stage than a Grand Prix. Contrary to popular supposition, the Monaco Grand Prix has not always been the richest race on the calendar. It was first run in 1929 but in 1938 and 1939 the race was not held, and although it was run in 1948 it was cancelled in 1949, 1951, 1953 and 1954.

This year's Walkinshaw XJR-15 race is guaranteed to result in a Jaguar win since all entries will be identical Jaguar muscle-cars. In 1952 the winner should have been Stirling Moss in a factory C-Type but it didn't work out like that. He had shared the fastest lap in practice with Pierre Levegh in the

Talbot who may have benefitted from a measure of French time-keeping chauvinism in the days before Olivetti and Longines sanitised the operation. Levegh was given pole but it was Moss who, as usual, stormed off into the lead in the Jaguar. In fact, Stirling's challenge was to come from Robert Manzon's Gordini, more nimble on the street circuit, and Manzon who had just taken the lead from Moss when the engine blew in Parnell's Aston Martin at Ste Devote. The scene was set for a debacle. Stagnoli's Ferrari spun twice on the oil, missed the Aston but blocked the other half of the track. Macklin's Aston Martin cannoned in, and when the leaders arrived they both spun and smashed into the bedlam. A newsreel film caught Moss out of his battered C-Type making a quick check of the damage only to hear the screech of Hume's Allard arriving out of con-

trol. Moss took a flying leap, doing a hop, step and jump over his Jaguar on to the hay bales! The spectators in those days were not fenced off from the action as they are today and two British spectators apparently hurdled the hay bales and helped Stirling extricate the bent C-Type for a pitstop to change wheels and straighten the worst of the damage but the well-intentioned "outside assistance" resulted in his disqualification and Vittorio Marzotto led home a Ferrari one-to-five finish. Tommy Wisdom was sixth in his privately-entered Jaguar C-Type.

The XJR-15 Walkinshaw Jaguars may not turn out to be an embarrassing success for Jaguar since they will be exercised before Grand Prix crowds this summer, further flaunting their outrageously motor-macho good looks while Jaguar build their own super car which will inevitably suffer by

comparison at a time when limited edition supercars are not quite the blue chip investment they were.

The Monaco Grand Prix began with disbelief in 1929 and has survived in disbelief ever since. Imagine trying to sell a race around the Monte Carlo streets to Bernie Ecclestone and FISA today. Too narrow, no run-offs, no pits, no paddock facilities, poor access, expensive hotels. But Monaco is Monaco - the only Grand Prix in the world that probably could have sold itself to Bernie Ecclestone today on the strength of being what it is and where it is. Love it or loathe it, Monaco is the jewel in the Formula One crown, the race that the television and the sponsor love. When the race was first proposed in 1928 "The Autocar" observed "There is going to be a Grand Prix at Monaco - a Grand Prix, mark you, in a Principality which does not possess a single

open road of any length, but has only ledges on the face of a cliff and the ordinary main thoroughfares that everyone who has been to the Casino knows well." Nothing much except the clientele has changed over the past half century. In the 1920s Monte Carlo and the Cote d'Azur had become fashionably within the motoring reach of the British social stratum that could afford the money and the time. Today Page & Moy and other packages of travellers have transformed the Principality with Jumbo-loads of enthusiasts flown in for the race weekend. We may say that it isn't like it used to be, but I suppose it never was.

There is a story of Phil Hill coming back to his hotel in his Ferrari racing overalls after the early morning practice session and being asked by an elderly lady resident of the hotel if he had

been involved in all that noise and what was it all about. Phil said they had been practicing for the Grand Prix. "Practicing? So much noise just practicing? Couldn't you do it somewhere else?" Times have changed. Residents overlooking the course who don't care to have their genteel way of living dominated by a motor race for the weekend, rent their apartment for *un bras et une jambe* and visit relatives up country. The shopkeepers who screamed about the upset to their trade have taken the easy way out and multiplied their prices by their feeling of outrage. Everyone in Monte Carlo likes the race these days.

The secret of the Monaco Grand Prix is having a good time and if you like motor racing, so much the better. You can either be a beautiful person or watch the persons who consider themselves to be. Being a watcher is cheaper. The beautiful people always ate at



ALL PICTURES BY MICHAEL COOPER

The way we were: (from top left clockwise) Frank Williams with Sally Courage, Piers Courage, Charlie Crichton Stuart, Bruce McLaren with Les Leston's bookmaker's board at the Tip Top bar. Bruce McLaren in Gondola off Cap Ferrat. Jackie Stewart, Tony Salmon of the BRDC and the Duke of Kent at Monaco outside the Tip Top bar after the prize-giving. Jackie and Helen Stewart on the Pedalo off Cap Ferrat beach. Salad Nicole with Jackie Stewart and Dick Attwood at the beach restaurant the day after the GP.

Rampoldi's restaurant on the flat-out downhill blast from the Casino Square to Mirabeau and the watchers drank two doors away in the Tip Top Bar spilling out onto the roadway and peering at the better-to-do dining in Rampoldi's who regarded the peerers-in as part of the race scenery.

The Tip Top Bar and Rosie's Bar half way up the hill from Ste Devote have always been the most popular watering holes for the Grand Prix Brits in Monaco, in fact red-haired Rosie will tell you that it was her British imbibers writing to Prince Rainer who saved her bar from demolition. The Tip Top was the centre of evening attraction in the days before Grand Prix drivers were paid so much money that they became professional sportsmen and couldn't be seen with a beer in their hand in case someone told their team manager. There were recent exceptions like Keke Rosberg, of course, and Ayrton Senna was actually swept away by police for turning up at the Tip Top on a motor-scooter without a crash helmet!

In the Good Old Days of the 1960s - which used to be last year and are now a generation ago - Graham Hill, Jackie Stewart, Bruce McLaren, Jochen Rindt, Piers Courage and their contemporaries would always come straight from the black-tie prize giving at the Hotel de Paris to indulge themselves in some less formal fun at the Tip Top. Many of the drivers stayed at the Metropole Hotel just above the Tip Top (now lost in a megabuck redevelopment) and on the "free Friday" after early morning practice, they spent the afternoon on the little beach at nearby Cap Ferrat, larking about on pedalos, and lunching on Salad Nicoise at the beach bar.

Les Leston, former racer and purveyor of everything a serious racing driver needed to wear, ran a "book" before the race and could always be found with his famous blackboard adjusting the odds as the race neared.



Bruce McLaren at Cap Ferrat

Les wasn't the first bookmaker in Monaco. In 1960 when Rene Dreyfus won in a Bugatti Type 35B, Pari-mutuel betting was introduced in Monaco for the Grand Prix and bets could be placed while the race was running, up to the 40th lap! Local Monegasque Bugatti driver Louis Chiron was the favourite to win but Dreyfus had decided to fit an extra 30-litre fuel tank where the passenger would have sat so that he could switch tanks instead of stopping to refuel. The crowd was happy with their bets and Chiron led Dreyfus past the 40th lap but late in the race Louis had stopped to refuel and Dreyfus closed the gap. He remembered the occasion vividly, in his superb memoirs "My Two Lives", "I knew I had been steadily gaining on Chiron. Suddenly just ahead of me, I saw a whisp of blue smoke and I smelled gasoline. It had to be him. It just had to be. It was." Chiron's accelerator was sticking. In later years Louis was the excitable Clerk of the Course at Monaco, and in 1930 he was just as volatile. As Dreyfus closed in to pass, the infuriated Chiron unfastened his Herbert Johnson helmet and hurled it away! The Dreyfus win paid 74 francs on a 10 franc bet and there were a lot of unhappy punters convinced that the Bugatti drivers had fixed the race between them, but those who thought that hadn't seen Chiron throw his helmet away or watched

him as the two drivers walked to the royal presentation box, Dreyfus dazed with his hands bloodied and blistered, Chiron blazing angry, refusing to acknowledge Rene. Shades of Senna and Prost!

Retired drivers often made Monaco their haven of retirement before tax advantages of the Principality made residence almost compulsory for the modern young racing multi-millionaire. Eddie Hall, who gained fame as a Bentley racer in the Tourist Trophy races of the 'thirties, had an apartment overlooking the start/finish and he and his wife Joan hosted the BRM drivers to breakfast every morning. In later years Eddie and Joan offered the British writers their hospitality and after Eddie's death Joan still entertains the British scribes with tales of her days as manager of the TT Bentley pits and her drive with Eddie in a K3 MG in the Mille Miglia. Roy and Sue Salvadori host a race-day luncheon for many of the Ancient Pilotes in their apartment high above the grid. Roy won the Le Mans 24-hour race for Aston Martin with Carroll Shelby in 1959, and Sue's father Johnny Hindmarsh won at Le Mans for Lagonda in 1935. A fine original oil painting by F. Gordon Crosby of the winning Lagonda graces the Salvadori apartment while Roy jokes that a less distinguished painting of his Aston victory languishes in their basement store-room!

Auctions by Sotheby's, Brooks and Christies now add early glamour to the Monday and Tuesday of race week with foreign bidders flowing in from the Mille Miglia retro and often leaving before the youngest generation of "tomorrow people" begin arriving on the Wednesday before the Grand Prix. These prestige sales have effectively completed the full circle of Monaco history bringing the cars, drivers and the personalities who helped to build the event into the jewel of the Grand Prix crown together again in what has become a glittering week of speed in the legendary backdrop of the Principality.

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Electronic Throttle 970th	<u>139.50</u>	Novice square	<u>1155.00</u>	Filter King glass bowl	
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Full range of Smiths Lucas Gauges		Novice square	<u>1155.00</u>	16 Row Oil Coolers	
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Special Type Process	223.85	Rubber	
Masta Type Gauge	227.50	of Cables	12.00
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MONACO GRAND PRIX 1991

Monte Carlo, 12th May

CIRCUIT:

Circuit de Monaco
Automobile Club de Monaco
23 Boulevard Albert 1er, BP 364
98000 Monaco
Monaco



LOCATION:

The Monaco circuit is on the streets of Monte Carlo, 20kms west of Nice.



BY CAR:

The A8 highway (compulsory fee) and the N7 main road (shorter but more crowded than the highway) both run along the Côte d'Azur.



BY TRAIN/BUS:

Monte Carlo train station is easy to reach from all parts of Europe. From Paris' Gare de Lyon, the fast TGV trains run to Nice. Change here for Monaco.



BY AIR:

Nice Côte D'Azur is only about 30kms from Monaco. (Helicopter Nice-Monaco).



TRAFFIC:

With many of the streets used for the circuit, traffic in Monaco is terrible during Grand Prix weekend. Advice: Go to Monaco by train.



HOTELS:

All hotels in Monaco are fully booked, but it is usually possible to find rooms along the coast.



CAMPING:

Very difficult in Monaco, but several sites along the coast.



TOURISM/SIGHTSEEING:

The Côte D'Azur has more or less everything, including beaches, museums and famous restaurants. Several interesting villages in the mountains



OUR OPINION:

**** (Races are rated from * to ***** from spectators point of view)



LAST YEARS RACE:

Winner/Distance: Ayrton Senna, McLaren Honda, 1.52.46.982/78 laps of 3.33kms.



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98000 Monaco
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LOOK AT THE LIGHTER SIDE OF F1 RACING

BOOKS

Now published in paperback is Christopher Hilton's biography of the World Drivers' Champion **AYRTON SENNA: THE HARD EDGE OF GENIUS** (Corgi, £5.99). The book traces Senna's development from learning to drive in a farm jeep right through to his modern status as the acknowl-

edged genius of motor racing and arguably the most talented driver since Jim Clark. Reviewed last year, Hilton's book is sure to prove a popular purchase with Grand Prix fans wishing to learn more about the South American driven on his relentless obsession with Formula One success.

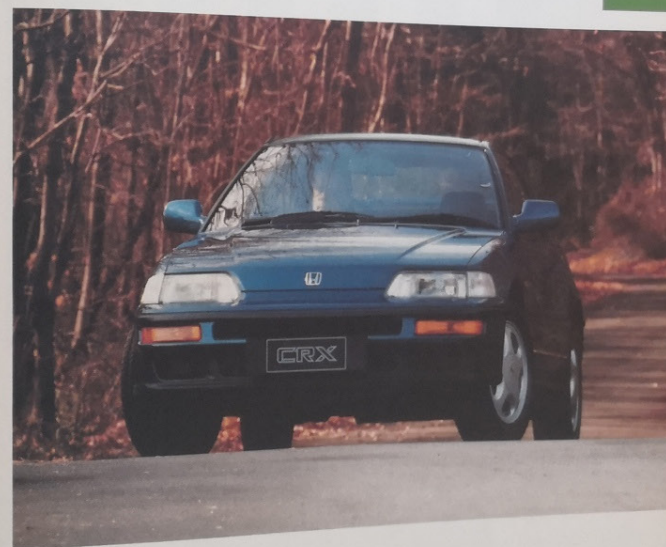
Due to be published on May 20 is one of the most comprehensive, readable and entertaining books on how to succeed in motor racing if you are inclined towards aiming for the top as a driver. Stuart Turner and John Taylor's **HOW TO REACH THE TOP AS A COMPETITION DRIVER** (Patrick Stephens Limited, £15.99). Reaching the top in racing or rallying is not just a matter of going faster than other competitors, but is also about planning, organisation, preparation, marketing, attention to detail and much more, as this book shows. Professional competition driving experts Stuart Turner and John Taylor present a wealth of nononsense advice based on their long and practical experience and it adds up to a essential reading for aspiring young drivers.

CARS

To mark the arrival of the first delivery of Honda UK's new NSX sports car in Britain, several of the first customers for the vehicle were given delivery of their cars at the headquarters of McLaren International for quite logical reasons. While the customers were being given an impressive tour of the facility at Woking before testing their 150-mph cars for the first time, GPE decided to test out another smaller Honda with an equally impressive reputation: the CRX 1.6i-VTEC. The idea was to try and obtain some insight into what success in Formula One may mean at the wheel of a road car. The DOHC VTEC engine was beautiful and the car handled equally beautifully, leaving its driver sad whenever a journey came to an end. The engine, derived from Honda's extensive Grand Prix racing-related development programmes, incorporates a variable valve timing and lift mechanism featuring two valve settings instead of only the normal one. This optimises valve timing and provides a better spread of power and an exhilarating performance.

One of the basic approaches taken in promoting the evolution of Honda's engine technology has been to pursue higher output through increased engine rpm and this is achieved with 150 ps at 7,600 rpm. The sophisticated technical know-how acquired through racing by Honda - they look upon their Grand Prix participation as a 'mobile laboratory' - is passed onto

their mass production engines. Hence the VTEC (Variable Valve Timing and Lift Electronic Control System). The VT also features a refined suspension system and high-performance tyres, large diameter front disc brakes and a catalytic converter. Four-wheel anti-lock braking is a standard feature.



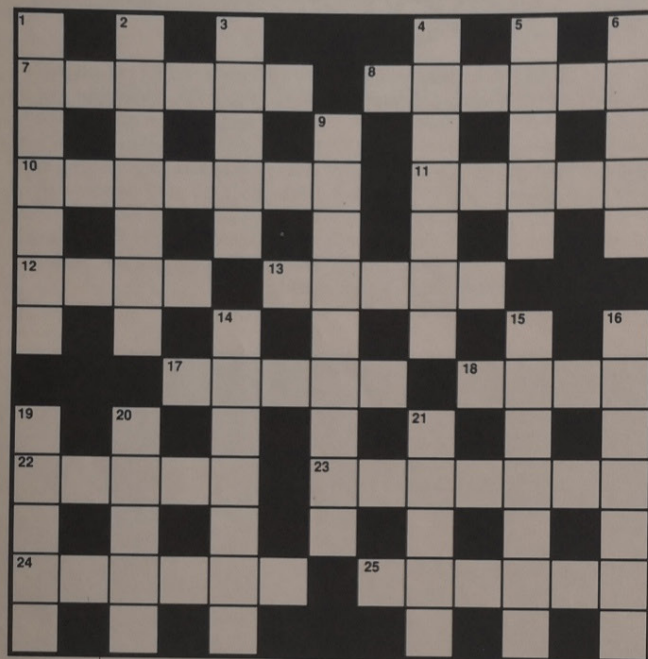
ART IN MOTION AT MONACO

Visitors to Monaco are encouraged to visit one of the extra delights of the Grand Prix weekend between May 7 and 13 by calling in at Alan Fearnley's fourth European exhibition of motoring art. The exhibition, announced and organised by the GRAND PRIX SPORTIQUE of Tetbury, Gloucestershire, England, will be held at the Salon Beaumarchais, Hotel de Paris, Monte Carlo, from the Tuesday through to the following Monday.

The exhibition will be open daily at the following times (subject to the opening of the race circuit): May 7, 3pm-8pm; May 8, 10am-4pm; May 9, 10am-8pm; May 10, 10am-5.30pm; May 11, 10am-8pm; May 12, 10am-8pm; May 13, 10am-1pm. Visitors to the exhibition will be the first to see Mr Fearnley's latest original oil on canvas paintings, spanning several decades of motor sport. His original works hang in the offices of Rolls Royce, Porsche, Rothmans International, Sir Jack

Brabham, Tom Walkinshaw Racing, McLaren International and Jackie Stewart and many museums around the world. Singer-songwriter Chris Rea is another collector and he commissioned Mr Fearnley to paint the picture for the sleeve of his latest album *Auberge*. Many past and present drivers have endorsed the quality of his work by signing limited edition prints of his work including Juan Manuel Fangio, Niki Lauda, Alain Prost and Nelson Piquet.

GRAND PRIX EDITIONS - CROSSWORD NO.3



ACROSS

7. "A Formula One car is really an _____ because it responds to different kinds of treatment" (Jackie Stewart) (6)
8. See 10 Across
10. And 8 Across. Nakajima's 1991 partner (7,6)
11. Standard _____, a Belgian football team (5)

ACROSS

12. Eric Broadley heads this design team (4)
13. Sheffield United striker (5)
17. 1980 Motor Racing World Champion (5)
18. Renault's wins in their home Grand Prix (4)
22. 1970 Motor Racing World Champion (5)

23. His initials are carried in the Lotus badge (7)
24. This constructor had sixteen wins between 1958 and 1967 (6)
25. Mansell would complain about one on the golf course (3,3)

DOWN

1. Italian fans called him 'The Lion' (7)
2. Benetton's tyres for 1991 (7)
3. The accidents motor racing dreads (5)
4. Former Williams and Benetton manager, now with Lotus (7)
5. Stirling Moss's race number (5)
6. Hunt, now a BBC commentator (5)
9. Venue for eight United States Grand Prix races (4,5)
14. Belgium's top driver (7)
15. We're concerned with this One! (7)
16. Designer of Leyton House's new transverse gearbox (7)
19. Motor racing circuit (5)
20. Rugby code (5)
21. 15th Grand Prix in the 1991 season (5)

Answers in next month's Grand Prix Editions

ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD NO. 2

ACROSS		
7. Ayrton	8. Suzuka	10. Dallara
11. Tyres	12. None	13. Green
17. Lotus	18. Hate	22. Clark
23. Spanish	24. Brazil	25. Deller
DOWN		
1. Bandini	2. Try-line	3. Comas
4. Surtees	5. Curry	6. Marsh
9. Larrousse	14. Cockpit	15. Fagioli
16. Gerhard	19. Scuba	20. Japan
21. Camel		

FRW 'LOFTY' ENGLAND'S LE MANS PAINTING TO BECOME LIMITED EDITION ART PRINT

A new limited edition art print from the famous Cuneo painting of a pit stop in the 1953 Le Mans race will be published this Spring to mark the 40th anniversary of the C-type Jaguar. The original painting was presented to 'Lofty' England by Jaguar and Daimler distributors and dealers in Britain on his retirement from Jaguar in 1974. The limited edition print will be individually signed by both Terence Cuneo and 'Lofty' England.

The Cuneo painting is a dramatic portrayal of a pit stop in the 1953 race with 'Lofty' England directing work on the winning car, number 18. Painstakingly sketched initially from a re-enactment of the scene, complete with C-type, pit equipment and mechanics, the painting is an historic record of one moment in a famous event and contains numerous portraits.

Mr England began his motoring career as a Daimler apprentice in 1927. During the 1930s he was a mechanic to a number of leading racing drivers including Dick Seaman, Whitney Straight and Bira, and raced motor-cycles himself.

He joined Alvis shortly before

the outbreak of the war. After active service in the RAF he returned to Alvis as Assistant Service Manager. In 1946 he joined the rapidly expanding Jaguar organisation as Service Manager. When Jaguar began to take a serious interest in racing and rallying, it was 'Lofty' who master-minded the team organisation that led to so many international victories - including five wins at Le Mans. Subsequently Mr England progressed to become a director and in 1972 became Chairman in succession to Sir William Lyons, Jaguar's founder. He now lives in retirement in Austria.

It is for his achievements as Jaguar's racing Team Manager during the 1950s that 'Lofty' England is best known, and Terence Cuneo has captured the spirit of the 24-hour French Classic brilliantly. With limitations on the number of people allowed by the regulations to work on a car, 'Lofty' stands on the pit 'counter' (just below the 'J' of Jaguar). Len Hayden takes off a rear wheel while Gordon Gardner on the pit counter holds the replacement ready; Duncan Hamilton listens carefully

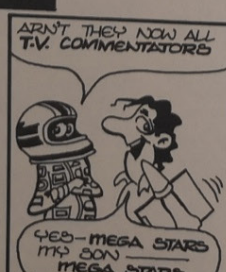
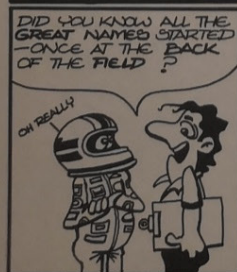
as Tony Rolt reports on circuit conditions. The famous Cuneo 'trade mark' - a mouse - is perched on the jack at Rolt's feet. Although Jaguar first won Le Mans in 1951, it was in 1953 that the marque achieved its first crushing victory, taking 1st, 2nd, 4th and 9th places.

'Jaguar Pit Stop, Le Mans 1953' will be published in a limited edition of 850 copies, individually signed by Terence Cuneo and 'Lofty' England, in May. Prints will be available direct from the publishers, Richard Lucraft Limited Editions, 1 Barrett Street, London W1M 6DN, at £115 unframed and £165 luxuriously framed. A full colour brochure is available on request.

Richard Lucraft Limited Editions is a leading art print publisher in the transport field whose artists include Frank Wootton, Gerald Coulson and Terence Cuneo. Although well known for their railway and aviation prints, this new print is the publisher's first motoring subject.



Meanwhile back in the Pits



THIS MAN IS THE
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FOR 20 YEARS,
HE'S HELPED US MAKE
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daunting test.

Its name is Signor Mantovanelli.

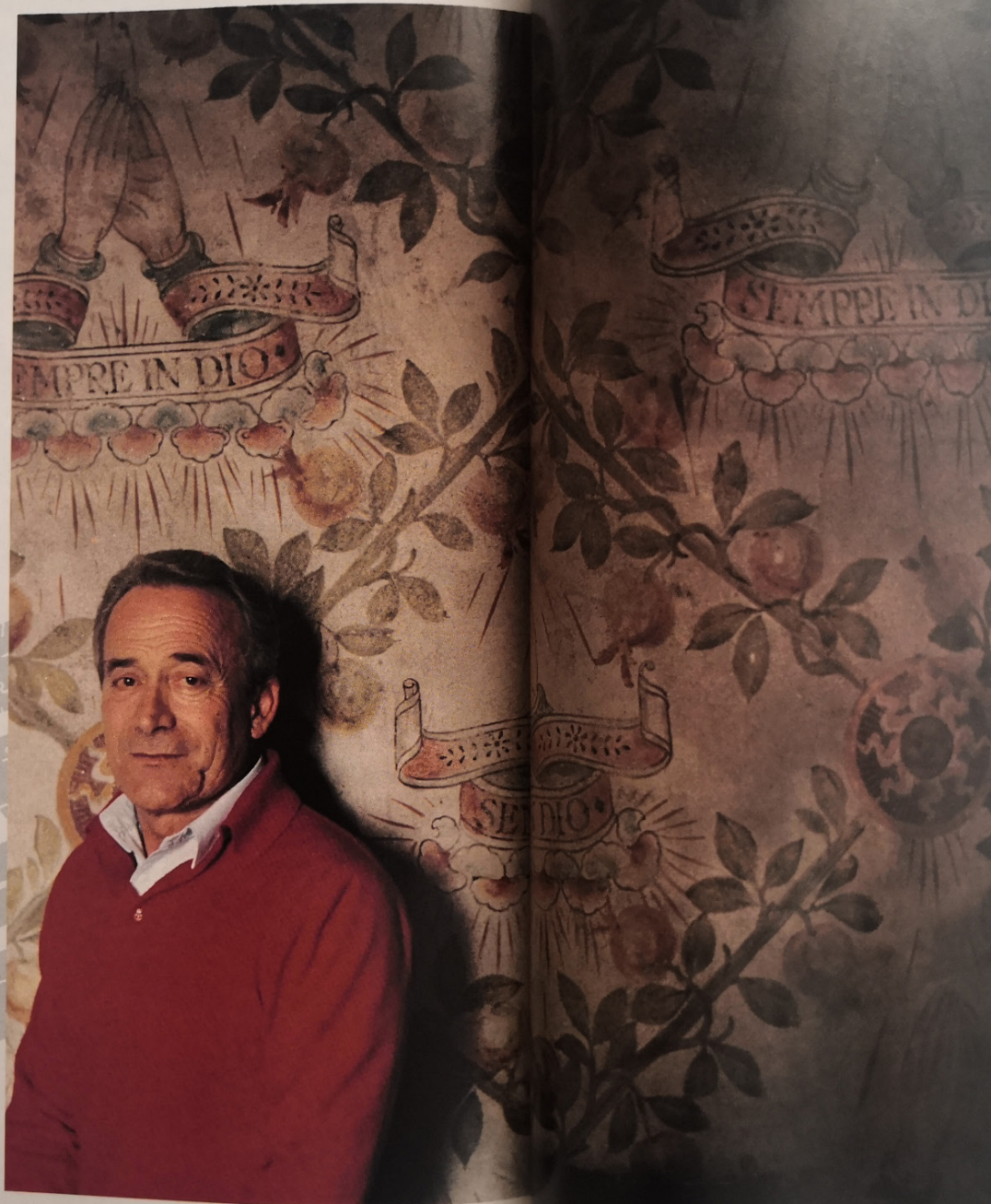
A driver with nerves of steel and the
right foot of a baby elephant, Signor
Mantovanelli has been putting tyres
through their paces at Pirelli's unique

research track
near Milan for
more than 20
years.

Whether he's
testing for grip in the wet at speeds
that would make Mansell offer up a
small prayer, or braking murderously
on roads surfaced with Italy's treach-
erous 'porfiro' cobblestones, Signor
Mantovanelli is able to tell the Pirelli
designers what none of their banks
of electronic equipment can ever
quite reveal. What a new tyre feels
like to a driver.

It's just a small part of Pirelli's
research and development, which
takes a full six years to hone a Pirelli
tyre to perfection.

Every tread pattern, for example,
is minutely analysed to get the best



resistance to aquaplaning, while
keeping road noise to a minimum.

What drives the design team on is
the knowledge that any new Pirelli has
to mark an improvement in safety,
performance, comfort and economy.
And to win just as many admirers
among the world's car manufacturer's
as its predecessors.

A tall order, considering that the
Pirelli design studio has already been
responsible for such landmarks as the
world's first run-flat tyre. And the first
commercially available low-profiles.

Now they appear to have set them-
selves another standard with the
mould-breaking Pirelli P2000.

A tyre that brings low-
profile technology within
the reach of the every-
day driver.

And a worthy addition
to a Pirelli range currently
fitted as standard on
anything from a Ferrari to a Mini.

In fact, it seems that a lot of drivers
out there already owe a vote of thanks
to Signor Mantovanelli.

After all, if he didn't drive on Pirelli
tyres so badly, they might not drive on
them so well.



PIRELLI

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The lethal cocktail which left Alain giggling ...and other stories

Motor racing has always flirted with the seamier and sensational side of life giving rise to a host of mythological tales (my lawyer tells me it's best to use this phrase); dead team owners apparently alive and well and living with Elvis in Latin America; motor sport administrators masterminding train robberies etc. and it is certainly true that a small number of the F1 fraternity have spent some time behind bars rather than drinking at them. But things seemed to have got out of hand recently what with the sabo-

tage attack on the Leyton House cars in Phoenix, and Williams team manager Peter Windsor now requiring a permanent bodyguard after being used as a test bed for a baseball bat manufacturer. Much of the violence at football matches has been blamed on the bad behaviour of the players on the pitch so could the actions of our Grand Prix stars have something to do with this current racing crime-wave? After all, in Brazil none other than the World Champion himself was seen throwing his birthday cake at all and sundry in



The Professor was amused

the McLaren pit and rather more seriously, Osella driver Olivier Grouillard was involved in a case of TDA (police jargon - taking and driving away) or nicking a car to you and me. After arriving at an Elf-hosted Samba Party in Sao Paulo by taxi, Grouillard, who has the look of a man who has only just learnt to walk upright that morning, decided to leave in the first car that was brought round to the front of the house as the guests were leaving. Unfortunately this vehicle was on loan to the F1 correspondent of "The Times" who spent the rest of the weekend in a mood befitting a writer for "The Thunderer". A mood that didn't improve after the race when his Sports Editor informed him that he had missed the deadline for the early editions of Monday's paper forcing them to use a story provided by a news agency, with the added irony that agency man and Times man were sharing a desk in the track press office.

Watching the usual post race chaos, as his colleagues desperately filed their stories, was Maurice Hamilton of The Observer, safe in the knowledge that he had a whole week to write his story. "The only thing I've filed this weekend is my nails," smirked Maurice. At least the press office was a safe place to be compared to the rest of the city. Sao Paulo might be named after a saint but if St. Paul had been on the road to the Interlagos circuit rather than Damascus he would have been lucky to live long enough to make his famous conversion. I personally witnessed one shooting and some of the Tyrrell team were shot at by a policeman while attempting a short cut to get through the race morning traffic. In fact I tried the very same manoeuvre with 7-Up Jordan driver Bertrand Gachot remembering his recent altercation with a London cabbie and a can of "Mace" which earned him the sobriquet C.S. Gassot, I naturally did my best to persuade him not to

argue too strongly with the gun-toting lawmen. Eventually we found a picture of Bert in the race programme and were grudgingly waved on our way. Because of its striking livery the Jordan outfit is now known in the pit-lane as "the green team" and as one anonymous team wag put it "and when Eddie is not around it's "the Greenpeace Team".

I apologise if this article is beginning to read like the script to 'Crimewatch UK', but now I must ask if FISA itself is in league with the petty crooks and criminals who make rich pickings when the Grand Prix circus comes to town. F1 drivers regularly travel with exotic golf clubs in the boot of their car and journalists and photographers carry an expensive arsenal of equipment wherever they go, so FISA have decided to go in for a bit of "aiding and abetting" by designing a Media Car Park sticker which shows a drawing of a car boot containing an expensive looking briefcase, a camera and a computer! The organising body does at least have a sense of humour as this year's Guest Pass shows a hand holding a glass, although they have refrained from printing the word "freeloader" under the illustration.

Ferrari's poor showing in Brazil did little to dampen the high spirits of Prost and Alesi who were seen quaffing caiparinias, the lethal Brazilian cocktail, in the VIP lounge at Sao Paulo airport with ex-Ferrari driver Patrick Tambay. When their flight to Paris was called the Professor was most amused to find that he was experiencing some difficulty in standing let alone walking to the plane, and as he stooped to pick up his bag Alesi had to point out that this was not in fact his luggage. "Never mind, maybe there is something interesting inside", giggled Prost although I can assure Interpol that he did eventually find his own bag. No doubt he was as glad as the rest of us to be leaving



this sordid city, best summed up by the fact that the Sao Paulo Hilton Room Service menu features an item called a "Beirut Burger". As a firm believer in the old adage that you should try everything in life at least once, except incest and folk dancing, I can report that it is a particularly nasty way of staving off hunger pains. Despite all the pre-season predictions that this year would see the end of McLaren's domination of F1, after two races they are yet again the team to beat and the following anecdote goes some way towards illustrating just how efficiently the team operates. During the two days of qualifying a spare MP4/6 chassis was sitting at Sao Paulo airport. As soon as Saturday's practice was over with all three cars intact a quick 'phone call to the airport saw the chassis returned to Woking. Style, money and balls - just like Jumbo really!

Finally I have a message for Ayrton Senna: I have in my possession a Brazilian newspaper with an advertisement for Kawasaki Jet Skis featuring an endorsement from yourself. If you do not want this advertisement passed on to senior management at Honda I suggest that you get in touch with me through Grand Prix Editions so that we can discuss terms...

Jumbo

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5/3

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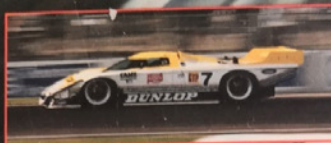
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